THE DAWN OF THE CATHOLIC REVIVAL IN ENGLAND, 1781-1803

UNIFORM WITH THESE VOLUMES.

THE LIFE AND TIMES OF BISHOP CHALLONER

(1691-1781).

BY

EDWIN H. BURTON, D.D., F.R.Hist.S.,

VICE-PRESIDENT OF ST. EDMUND'S COLLEGE.

IN TWO VOLUMES.

(*In the Press.*)

Emery Walker Ph. sc.

Right Rev. John Douglass
Bishop of Centuria
Vicar Apostolic of the London District 1790-1812
From a painting at St. Edmund's College

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1781-1803

BY

BERNARD WARD, F.R.HIST.S.

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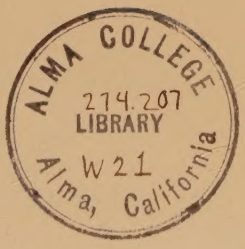
VOL. II.



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CONTENTS OF THE SECOND VOLUME.

CHAP.		PAGE
XIX.	Arrival of the First French Refugee Priests (1792)	1
XX.	Subscriptions for the French Refugee Priests (1792-1793)	19
XXI.	Mission of Monsignor Erskine (1793-1795)	37
XXII.	The Cisalpine Club (1792-1830)	51
XXIII.	Dissolution of the English Colleges and Convents on the Continent (1793-1795)	69
XXIV.	Foundation of Colleges in England (1793-1795)	95
XXV.	The Convents Established in England (1794-1795)	115
XXVI.	Bishop Berington and Propaganda (1795-1797)	130
XXVII.	Revival of Controversies (1797-1798)	145
XXVIII.	The French Refugee Priests, continued (1795-1800)	163
XXIX.	Events in Rome. Fall of the English College (1795-1799)	176
XXX.	Political Events at the Close of the Eighteenth Century (1799-1800)	194

CHAP. PAGE

XXXI. Pius VII. and the Concordat (1800-1802) . 218

XXXII. Final Pacification of the Midland District (1801-1803) 235

Appendices 257

Chronological Table of Events 297

Index 307

LIST OF ILLUSTRATIONS OF THE SECOND VOLUME.

RIGHT REV. JOHN DOUGLASS, Bishop of Centuria, Vicar Apostolic of the London District (1790-1812) *Frontispiece*

From a painting at St. Edmund's College.

FACING PAGE

MONSEIGNEUR DE LA MARCHE, Bishop of St. Pol de Léon 4

From an engraving by Skelton of a painting by Danloux, a French emigré *artist.*

THE KING'S HOUSE, WINCHESTER 26

The engraving in Milner's History of Winchester, *from which this is taken, was copied from the original drawings of Sir Christopher Wren; but a large part of the building shown was never completed. The whole was destroyed by fire some years ago.*

MONSIGNOR CHARLES ERSKINE 38

From a painting at Blairs College, Aberdeen.

SIR JOHN THROCKMORTON, BART. 44

From a painting at Coughton, the family seat in Warwickshire.

REV. JOHN BEW, D.D. 56

The original, rather larger than a miniature, is at Oscott.

THE OLD COLLEGE, OSCOTT 102

This shows old Oscott before Milner's additions. It is taken from a painting in the Guest Room at New Oscott.

THE REV. JOHN MILNER (*aetat c.* 45) 122

From a painting in possession of the Benedictine Community established by Milner at Winchester, now at East Bergholt, Suffolk. The book of the Rule of St. Benedict lies open before him. The Gothic design of the chair and other furniture is noteworthy, and in keeping with the architectural style of his church at Winchester.

FACING PAGE

THE CONVENT AT HAMMERSMITH 128

From a print in possession of the Benedictine Community formerly at Hammersmith, now at Teignmouth in Devonshire.

THE REV. JOHN KIRK 148

The original of this, painted by Mackey, used to hang in the Refectory at Sedgley Park School. It is now at St. Wilfrid's, Oakamoor, its lineal descendant.

THE ABBÉ GUY TOUSSAINT CARRON 174

The bust from which this is taken is in the church which he built at Somers Town.

ST. EDMUND'S COLLEGE, OLD HALL, WARE . . . 194

This shows the College as in the early part of the nineteenth century before the addition of Pugin's chapel, etc. The original was painted by Mr. Kenelm Digby, who used to visit the College when an undergraduate at Cambridge about the year 1820.

BISHOP THOMAS HUSSEY, F.R.S., Bishop of Waterford and Lismore, 1797-1803; Chaplain to the Spanish Ambassador in London 200

From a painting by Gainsborough at the Spanish Place Presbytery.

REV. ARTHUR O'LEARY, O.S.F. 208

From a painting at the Irish Dominican Monastery, Lisbon.

THE ABBÉ JEAN JACQUES MOREL, Formerly Director of the "Petit Seminaire" at Evreux, Normandy . . . 234

The painting from which this is taken hangs in the Sacristy of the church built by him at Hampstead.

ALEXANDER GEDDES, LL.D. 248

From a painting at Thorndon Hall, the seat of Lord Petre.

BISHOP MILNER, Vicar Apostolic of the Midland District, 1803-1826 254

The miniature from which this is taken is preserved at Oscott, and is the earliest picture of Milner as a Bishop.

THE DAWN OF THE CATHOLIC REVIVAL IN ENGLAND.

CHAPTER XIX.

ARRIVAL OF THE FIRST FRENCH REFUGEE PRIESTS.

1792.

DURING the latter half of the year 1792, English Catholics became occupied about new and unexpected events, which not only had the most desirable effect of distracting them from their own internal disputes, but likewise brought about results which had a permanent and far-reaching influence on the future of Catholicity in this country. This was the arrival of the French refugee priests, most of them in a state of poverty or even destitution, which brought forth one of the greatest national acts of charity recorded in our history. The English people had always been regarded as the hereditary enemies of the French. They differed from them in race, sympathy and religion. Yet as soon as they understood the true meaning of the events which were happening on the other side of the Channel, and recognised that the refugees who arrived in such vast numbers were in truth the victims of religious persecution, they rose as one man, irrespective of religion or party, and joined together in making a supreme effort to relieve the wants of the poor suffering exiles, and to give them a home in this country until such time as affairs in France should mend. Hundreds and thousands of Englishmen, Protestants as well as Catholics, helped the French refugee clergy by their money and by their personal service, and by their influence on public opinion, all of which conduced to alleviate the unavoidable hardships of exile.

It was impossible for any one living in England at that time to be indifferent to the events that were happening in

France. Some followed Fox and his party, in looking upon the Revolution as a blessing, inasmuch as it had brought about the fall of a tyrannical government; others, with those who were more conservative, saw in it only a severe blow to all social order and religion. The publication of Edmund Burke's *Reflections on the Revolution in France* in 1790, went far to influence public opinion in the latter direction. Whatever view was taken, however, of its ultimate effect, such an upheaval so close to home could not but fill thoughtful minds with apprehension, if not even alarm.

The English Catholics were more closely concerned than the rest of the nation. Many of them, including the majority of their clergy, had been educated among the Catholics of France, and had learnt to regard them as their brethren. Some of their most important foreign establishments were in that country, several in Paris itself, so that to the motives which others had for anxiety must be added in their case apprehension for the personal safety of many near and dear to them.

From an early period in the progress of the Revolution, Frenchmen began to look to England as the land of liberty and peace, where those who were expelled from their country could take refuge. In 1789 and 1790 a considerable number both of laity and clergy had come to this country. These were the *émigrés* properly so-called, supporters of the "*Ancien Régime*," who went into voluntary exile on account of the Revolution, and whose property in France was declared confiscated in consequence. In May, 1791, Edmund Burke, speaking in the House of Commons on the Quebec Government Bill, took occasion to express his warm sympathy with the clergy and others who were suffering in France for their religion, and his remarks were received with cheering in the House. This seems to have been the signal to direct the eyes of the suffering priests towards England, and when numbers of them were banished or deported out of the country in 1792 and the following years, many bent their steps thither.

The events which were to lead up to this result may be said to have begun when the law of the Civil Constitution of the Clergy was passed, on July 12, 1790. By this law the priests of France were called upon to take the so-called "Civic Oath," by which they professed themselves servants of the State. The Oath was cleverly drawn up, and at the outset

not every one realised that it was definitely schismatical. The great majority of the clergy indeed refused it; but a certain number thought that it might be taken without open rupture with the Church. We may quote as an example, Abbé D'Ancel, a distinguished Professor at the College d'Harcourt, at Paris, well known during his exile in England, and for seven years Professor of Philosophy at St. Edmund's College. When the law was first made, he not only took the Oath himself, but wrote a pamphlet to prove its lawfulness. Very soon, however, he changed his opinion; he retracted as publicly as he could, and afterwards proved his sincerity by going with the others into exile. In two briefs, dated respectively March 10 and April 13, 1791, Pope Pius VI. decided definitely against the lawfulness of the Oath, and from that time forward no Catholic was able to take it in good faith. Those who took it afterwards did so chiefly from worldly motives, for great inducements in the shape of speedy preferment were held out to them by those in power, while to refuse it the Oath meant apparent prospect of starvation. In the event, in Paris out of about 800 priests, some 200 took the Oath, and in the Provinces about 10,000 out of 60,000. Many of these, however, afterwards retracted and went into exile. Indeed, one of the great difficulties to be dealt with later on when the French priests were in England was that a certain number of them had taken the Civic Oath, and it was considered necessary that they should in some way publicly repair the scandal they had caused before they could be absolved from their censures. Out of all the French episcopate, only four took the Oath.

On November 27 in the same year, a further law was passed, by which all "*prêtres fonctionnaires*," that is those who held any office or benefice, if they refused to take the Oath, should be considered as "*réfractaires*" and forfeit it; and any person exercising such functions after his post had been suppressed, should be liable to prosecution as a disturber of the public peace. This last provision was due to the difficulty which arose in consequence of the small number who took the Oath. It became manifestly impossible to fill all even of the chief ecclesiastical posts with "Constitutional Priests," as they became called, and there was no alternative but to suppress

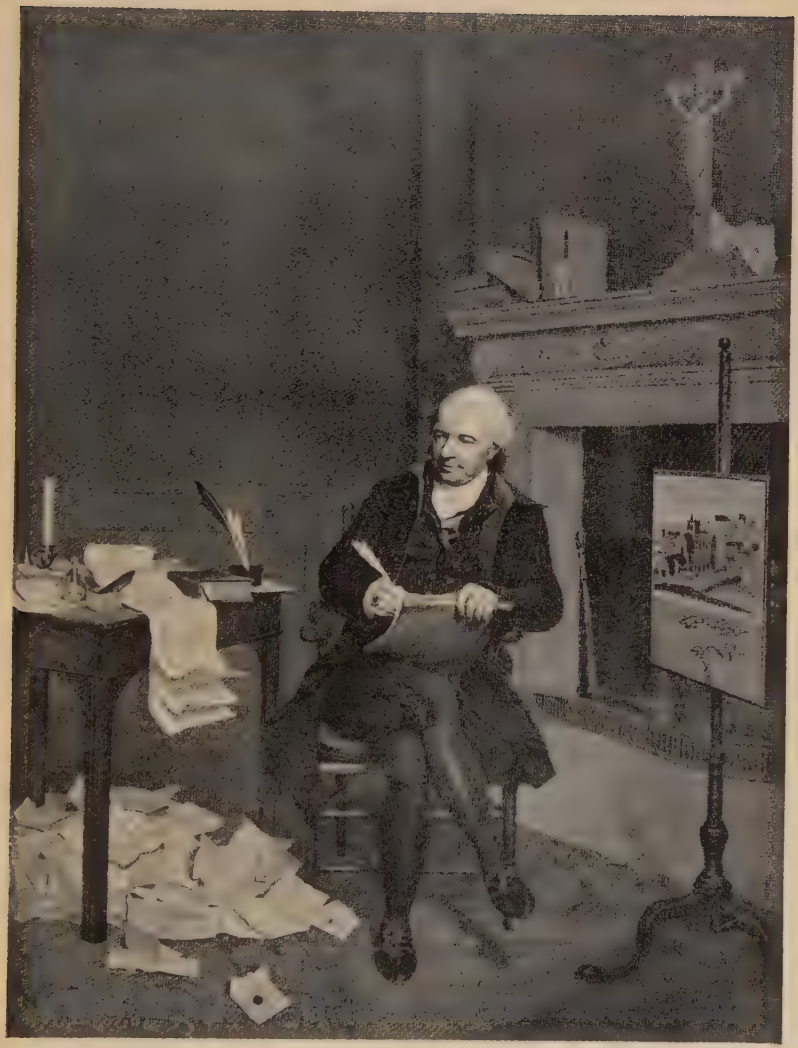
a large number of the parishes, and some of the episcopal sees.

Among the bishops whose sees were suppressed was one who was destined to take a leading part in connection with the reception of the exiled clergy in England—Monseigneur de la Marche, Bishop of St. Pol de Léon, a small town in Brittany near St. Malo. He was among the first to leave France, and is called by Plasse[1] the "Precursor". A short account of his history and antecedents will be our best introduction to his remarkable personality.

Count Jean François de la Marche was born at Quimper, in Brittany, in 1729. When a youth he was destined by his parents for a military career, and he fought in the War of the Austrian Succession. Being wounded in the battle of Piacenza, like another St. Ignatius, he forthwith determined to resign his commission, and devote himself to the service of the Church. He was ordained priest in 1756, and became Bishop of St. Pol de Léon in 1772, so that he had already occupied that position nearly twenty years when in consequence of a dispute with the civil power he found himself obliged to take refuge by secret flight.

The quarrel arose out of a demand made in July, 1790, by the municipality of Brest to have the use of his cathedral for a celebration in honour of the anniversary of the taking of the Bastille. The demand was met by a curt refusal on the part of the bishop. A state of rupture resulted between him and the civil authorities. In February, 1791, his see was suppressed under the new law, and as he continued to exercise his office, he became liable to punishment. A company of twenty gendarmes were sent to his house to arrest him. Escaping by a back door, the bishop concealed himself for some days at the house of a friend, till an opportunity offered of quitting the country. A party of English smugglers were about to set out from the neighbouring sea-coast village of Roskoff, and they consented to take the bishop with them. We can see the small party, consisting of Mgr. de la Marche and a few friends, walking along the shore at eleven o'clock on the night of February 27 in rough and threatening weather. The boat is still ashore; but in an hour or two the rising tide will float it. All precautions

[1] F. X. Plasse, Titular Canon of Clermont, whose work, *Le Clergé Français réfugié en Angleterre*, published in 1886, is the standard authority on the subject.



Monseigneur de la Marche,
Bishop of St. Pol de Leon.

are taken to avoid attracting attention, and before sunrise the bishop has taken leave of his diocese and of his country, never to return.

The storm that had been gathering, soon after arose, and kept the boat out at sea for two days and nights. At times the whole party were in imminent danger of perishing; but God had other designs in store for the bishop, and the weather having moderated, they came in sight of the English shore, on the evening of Tuesday, March 1. Owing to the difficulty of evading the customs, they were prevented from landing all Wednesday, and it was not till two o'clock on Thursday morning that they cast anchor in Mount's Bay, on the Cornish coast. By an extraordinary coincidence, or as we should prefer to say, by a remarkable providence of God, the bishop on that very morning fell in with an old acquaintance, who now offered him every assistance in his distress, for he had been continually exposed to the weather, and almost without food since his departure from France. He took some rest and refreshment, adding in his diary, "I had the more need of this, as I had spent three nights in a vile leaky boat, in very bad weather, without any bed except some sail-cloth and sailors' clothes on planks and barrels of brandy. But providentally" (he adds) "I was not sea-sick: otherwise I could not have borne it, joined to the cold and the uneasiness of my feet."[1]

After recovering from the effects of his voyage, the bishop proceeded to London, arriving there during the progress of the disputes between the bishops and the Committee, as the Relief Bill was going through Parliament. He retired again to the West of England, and we find him resting at Wardour and afterwards at Lulworth, in both of which places he found peace and seclusion and a religious atmosphere as Catholic as that of the country he had just left.

The following year was to the Bishop of St. Pol de Léon one of comparative quiet, during which he was preparing himself, as it turned out, for work more important and more continuous than any which he had previously had to do in his own diocese. During this year priests were already arriving from France in sufficient numbers to call for considerable exertion in order to provide for them. The first London priest to devote

[1] *Gentleman's Magazine*, February, 1807, p. 100.

his time and work to their assistance was Rev. Thomas Meynell, the ex-Jesuit. He worked in conjunction with Dorothy Silburn, a widow lady, afterwards well known as the devoted friend of the French exiled clergy. She was a native of Durham —her maiden name was Robinson—and being left a widow without children, before the age of forty, she determined to devote the rest of her life to the assistance of the exiled priests. A private subscription among her friends realised over £400, which, added to her own income, was sufficient for a commencement. Her house at 10 Little Queen Street, Bloomsbury, became the centre of relief, and was known by them as the "Providence". From the first the Bishop of St. Pol de Léon was a frequent visitor there, always ready by his counsel and active co-operation to show sympathy with the work. Most probably he foresaw that there was every likelihood of a large increase in the number of exiles at no distant date, and he wished to be prepared for all contingencies.

The next great development of affairs in France was on August 10, 1792, when the great attack on the Tuilleries Palace took place, with its attendant massacres. The king was now a prisoner. The following day search was made throughout Paris for priests, and all who were found were imprisoned, either in the church of the *Carmes* in the Rue Vaugirard, or in the Seminary of St. Firmin, or in company with laymen in the common prisons of Paris. By no means all of these priests belonged to Paris. Many from the provinces had found their way to the capital, where hitherto ecclesiastics had been more leniently treated. They were now to suffer for their mistaken confidence.

The National Assembly having by this time become supreme, on August 26 they passed a law by which all "*prêtres fonctionnaires*" who refused to take the Civic Oath, were ordered to leave their residences within eight days, and to quit the country within a fortnight afterwards, in default of which they were to be deported to French Guiana, in South America. Every priest was free to select the country of his exile, and was required to inform the directory of the district of his choice, when he would be provided with a passport, and an allowance for travelling. This allowance was the miserable sum of three livres or francs a day, for which they were required to travel

at least three leagues. Any who returned became liable to ten years' imprisonment. The sick and those over sixty years of age were exempt from banishment, but they were not allowed to remain at their homes, being commanded to assemble in a central house in each district.

Within the prescribed time the great majority of the clergy had left their parishes. A few only remained here and there, who endeavoured to pass their lives in secret and to minister to the faithful at the risk of imminent peril.

Many of the priests who set out never reached the frontier. The early days of September were marked by the horrible massacres which began in Paris, and were taken up throughout the country. On the evening of September 2, nearly all the 180 priests who were imprisoned at the *Carmes*, including the venerable Archbishop of Arles, and three other bishops, the General of the Benedictines, several Jesuits and Capuchins, and many *curés* and *vicaires* belonging to the secular clergy, were murdered in cold blood. The Abbé Pannonie, who escaped in an almost miraculous manner, had been close to the archbishop at the moment of his martyrdom, and on coming to London was able to give a full account of the horrible scene. Within thirty-six hours the ninety-two priests imprisoned in the Seminary of St. Firmin had shared the fate of their brethren at the *Carmes;* and many priests and laymen were put to death in the other prisons of Paris. In all, it is said that over 1,400 persons lost their lives in Paris during those days.

Similar massacres followed in the provincial towns of France, marked with equal cruelty and suddenness. Under these circumstances many of the clergy considered that by applying for passports they would become marked men, with little chance of escape. The Jacobins themselves openly spoke of the passports as "death-warrants," and most of the priests preferred to take the risk of journeying without them. They would set out secretly by night, and make the best of their way by a circuitous route to the frontier, in the hope of escaping out of the country unperceived. The sick and the aged likewise preferred the chance of reaching a place of safety to the hardships with attendant risks which were the lot of those complying with the requisition of the law. All who were not

physically unable took this course, so that among the exiles were some in extreme old age, or in a state of decrepitude. Many also were absolutely destitute, having parted with all their worldly goods when they left their homes.

The clergy naturally made in each case for that frontier which was nearest to their own places of abode. Those in the South of France went to Spain and Italy. In the Papal States alone there were over 12,000[1] refugee priests. Those in the East of France resorted to Switzerland or Germany. The priests who came to England were for the most part from Brittany, Normandy, Picardy, or Paris itself. The majority of the first exiles from the North of France took refuge in the Channel Islands, where the similarity of race was combined with the liberty of English rule. The people of Jersey and Guernsey were for the most part Calvinists: there were practically no Catholics there. Under these circumstances, the open-handed way in which they received the exiled priests, who at one time numbered over 2,000, is not a little remarkable.

In England the number of priests who arrived with the first stream of exiles was estimated at about 3,000, including sixteen bishops. The first-comers did not create quite a favourable impression. This may have been partly due to religious prejudice, or perhaps to national feeling. We read of their being jeered at as they walked through the streets, or even pelted with stones or brick-bats. The English boatmen charged exorbitant prices for landing the refugees, threatening if they refused to pay, to send them back to France. These incidents, however, did not continue. The educated laymen were able to look below the surface, and public opinion, as shown by the newspapers and correspondence of the day, soon became firmly sympathetic towards the exiles. We can quote a specimen of each in illustration of what is here said. In the *Gentleman's Magazine* for September, 1792, appeared a letter signed by "A Detester of Anarchy and Injustice," of which the following is an extract:—

"A persecution equal to any exercised by Papists against Protestants, or Christians against Jews and Moors, is revived in our time, when we thought such horrors had ceased for ever. . . . It is a national act, and a reformation of the State

[1] According to a letter from Rev. R. Smelt.

is alleged as the cause of so many enormities. The greatest crime of these unhappy men is their innocence and helplessness. The outcry is raised that they are priests and they are hunted down like wild Indians. Once more, let us not hesitate for a moment to make the cause our own; and that charity which has been so liberally exerted in relief of every distress, domestic or foreign, will press forward to comprehend these miserable objects. No person can perish for want in this Christian, this Protestant country. We shall lose the professions and the characters in the men, and while we feel the woes and wrongs of the most distant of our kind, we shall stretch forth the arms of Christian charity to those who from the nearest shore are barbarously driven into them." [1]

The other example we shall cite is from a letter of one Mr. John Pugh, who was active in London on behalf of the exiles, to Bishop Walmesley.[2] In the course of his remarks he speaks as follows:—

"For my own particular part (if the opinion of such an one as me deserves to be mentioned), I think the business involves neither politics nor religion naturally. I am a Protestant, and love the cause of real liberty; but these unhappy men are strangers, thrown by unavoidable accident, not crime, on our shore, and in my humble opinion have the claim which distress not tainted by crime always should have."

These are, however, but isolated instances. If we want a real proof of English national opinion as a whole, we can find it in the actual reception which the exiles met with once they had become known, backed as it was by the very substantial evidence of the amount of money subscribed on their behalf.

We may also add the description of the learned Abbé Barruel, formerly chaplain to the Princess of Conti, who was one of those who took refuge in England. His work on the sufferings of the French clergy, both at home and abroad, during the Revolution, was written during his exile in London. He wrote first in French, and afterwards brought out an edition in English, from which latter the following description is quoted:—

"Every vessel that arrived with a cargo of these exiles,"

[1] *Gentleman's Magazine*, 1792, ii., p. 1166.
[2] *Clifton Archives*, vol. v.

he writes, "seemed to have been foreseen by the English through an instinct of benevolence. They flocked to the landing place to offer us a lodging or refreshments. Fifty, a hundred of us arrived at a time. They seemed more concerned for us than we were for ourselves. Where lodgings could not be had, a spacious room was prepared for the reception of those who were least able to provide for themselves. There they were nourished, visited and questioned about their wants. Carriages were hired for them, and frequently on the road a gentleman, a lady, a tradesman paid their expenses at the inn, and sometimes defrayed their whole journey to London. They were stopped at the country seats of the nobility to allow them some rest, and money was put into their hands or their pockets. Such as stood not in need of it were told that it might be of use to their brethren. A hundred different priests have desired me to name their benefactors; but I write of the general benevolence of the whole nation. A list of benefactions would equal the history of our misfortunes. It would be a pleasing task, but it would not be an easy one to give an adequate idea of the important services rendered by Lord and Lady George Cavendish to a great number of these priests, whom they received on their landing, who they entertained under their roof, and whose expenses they defrayed during the rest of their journey."[1]

Many who were not fortunate enough to be able to cross from Calais to Dover embarked wherever they could, and thought themselves fortunate to reach land, however long or dangerous the voyage, for the weather during all that fortnight was stormy. The following summary of news from the *Gentleman's Magazine* for October, 1792, gives an idea of what was proceeding at the various ports on the south coast:—

"Lewes, September 17. Upwards of 500 unfortunate emigrants were last week landed on our coast, who have had the fury of the elements to contend with, after escaping that of their countrymen. The Brighton packets, heavily laden with them, were driven by the winds far eastward of their usual track, and with difficulty made Hastings, Pevensey and Eastbourne. At the former place on Wednesday morning, seventy-

[1] *History of the Clergy during the French Revolution*, English edition, iii., p. 218.

six, all ecclesiastics, came on shore, among whom were the Bishop of Avranches, the Dean of Rouen, and several other dignitaries. The Bishop with great difficulty escaped from Avranches, by the assistance of one of his Grand Vicars, who with domestics accompanied him to Rouen, where they were for some days concealed. The populace having discovered them, they were again obliged to travel on foot in disguise to Dieppe. They arrived in the night, and took refuge a few hours in an hotel; and at the time appointed for the departure of the packet, ran to the sea-side, and it providentially being high water, were enabled to get out of reach of the rabble, who in one minute after, pursued them to the shore."

The contrast which the exiles felt after witnessing such scenes as have been alluded to, on arriving at a land where law and order reigned supreme, must have appealed forcibly to their feelings. We may quote Abbé Barruel once more:—[1]

"One must have spent four years in France," he writes, "amidst the Constitutionalists, the Girondins, the Maratists and the Jacobins of every description, to conceive the delightful sensation experienced by these priests on their first landing in England. Transported from the regions of terror and dismay into the land of peace and harmony, they seemed to begin a new life. The soul seemed to awaken from a terrifying dream of fiends and monsters, into a scene of perfect ease and liberty. I know by my own experience, and by that of my fellow exiles that it is impossible to express the exquisite sensations of a man first translated from the regions of revolutional tumult and horror into the peaceful abode of perfect security under a legal government. This was a new spectacle to men long habituated to the love of war and tumult of arms. We beheld it with astonishment, and our hearts enjoyed it with delight. We admired, we blessed it in every town and every village through which we passed. We could not help observing to one another, 'how pleasing is this serenity! Here we are not stunned with the ferocious sound of *ça ira*, nor the brutal carmaniole, nor the noise of drums calling to arms, either seditious sectionists, or nationals, or federates, or patriots always prepared for murder. We meet not here with rows of strewed bayonets, uplifted pikes, drawn sabres and all the terrible instruments of

[1] *History of the Clergy during the French Revolution*, p. 216.

death. Here we see a few soldiers scattered up and down without arms. These are perfectly unnecessary. The foaming ocean keeps the foreign enemy at a distance, at home peace and tranquillity are secured by law; Englishmen need no other protection.'"

About half of the exiles found their way to London. They arrived in all sorts of manners and conditions. Some were sufficiently well off to travel by coach, or even by post-chaise; others received benefactions on their landing, or on their way, which enabled them to perform at least part of their journey in comfort. Many went almost the entire distance on foot. The following account is from the *Annual Register* for September, 1792:—[1]

"Great numbers of priests and other emigrants have got across to the English coast within this last fortnight; they have been seen on the roads from Dover, Hastings, Eastbourne and Brighthelmstone, coming up to London in all possible ways, on coaches, waggons, fishcarts, etc. Some came walking, attended by a cart, which they ascended by turns as they were overfatigued. The streets of London now swarm with them; and as many of them are in absolute distress, subscriptions have been opened by our benevolent countrymen for their relief."

The population of London at that date was less than a million: so that the arrival of many hundreds of exiles made a sensible difference to the appearance of the streets. Writing on September 15, 1792, Sir Samuel Romilly says that "it is impossible to walk a hundred yards in any public street or thoroughfare here without meeting two or three French priests," and he wonders at "the phenomenon that priests should be thus walking unmolested in London twelve years after the Gordon Riots".

Needless to say, there was great difficulty in finding lodgings for so large a number. Many had to be satisfied with small rooms or garrets, and thought themselves fortunate to have those. As time went on, larger measures had to be taken, and public school-rooms and halls were fitted up as temporary dormitories. We read in one case of a large disused barn looking out on to the Cemetery of St. Pancras, being

[1] Chronicle, p. 36.

put to this purpose. Many of those who slept there and elsewhere rose in the morning with little or no means to procure themselves food during the day, and having to trust exclusively to the charity and benevolence of those whom they might meet in the streets. We are told of countless instances of their receiving assistance in this manner from total strangers.

Similar scenes were enacted daily in the provinces. Numerous letters are preserved in the *Westminster Archives* giving vivid pictures of the anxious incidents of those days. The following are given as typical of others, to convey some idea of what was continually proceeding. The first is from Rev. Richard Southworth, who was Rural Dean and Vicar for Hampshire. He wrote as follows to Bishop Douglass:—

"Brockhampton (near Havant), *Sep.* 17, 1792.

"My Lord,

"The poor exiled clergy from France came over into these parts in great numbers, particularly to Portsmouth and Gosport. I went down last week at Mr. Marsland's [1] request to see them. They asked leave to say Mass and confess one another. I immediately gave them permission to do so for the present, in compassion to their distress, and amidst the confusion and hurry of their coming every moment. Many persons of different persuasions pity their condition and contribute to their relief; but this can only be expected for a time. I understand there is question now of lodging, great part at least, in some place as was heretofore occupied by prisoners, where they will be more together, and raise a subscription for the present subsistence of such as have not the means of living. Perhaps they may then contrive to have a temporary chapel for their own use. When they get a little settled, I think it will be proper to confine the leave of hearing Confessions to a few of the most discreet and respectable of their number as shall be agreeable to the rest of their brethren, to whom they may afterwards apply, as also the laity of their country, each as he shall think fit. In regard to which I wait for your Lordship's directions, as well as in other matters

[1] The Rev. J. Marsland, priest at Gosport.

relating to these poor but faithful strangers, as no doubt you have numbers in London of the like description. Mr. Marsland and Mr. Cahill[1] have had much to do in procuring them lodgings and other assistance. Some also are coming into this neighbourhood, and I have agreed to take one of the poorest myself, and to give him board and lodging, if he can procure no assistance from his friends.

"I remain, with my dutiful respects,

"Your obliged humble servant,

"RICD. SOUTHWORTH."

The house to which Mr. Southworth alludes as formerly occupied by prisoners was at Forton, near Gosport, and was put by Government at the disposal of the exiles. At one time over two hundred were living there. Of this establishment we shall have to speak further presently.

The next letter which we shall give is from Rev. Philip Wyndham, who had been for many years chaplain at Arundel. He writes as follows:—

"ARUNDEL, SUSSEX, 24 *Sept.*, 1792.

"MY LORD,

"Last Wednesday arrived here eighteen French priests, some young, and the greatest part old. As soon as I heard of their arrival, went to give them all assistance in my power. I was greatly edified at their behaviour, having that day come ten miles afoot, and being Ember day, though they had been three days at sea, and in great danger of perishing, they could not be prevailed upon to take anything else but a little cabbage, turnips and such kind of food. The people of Arundel would not charge anything for their lodging, &c. Hope I have not done wrong in permitting one (whom they call the Dean) of them to say prayers [mass], as they very much desired to return thanks to Almighty God for having preserved them from being cast away. Beg to know what conduct I must follow in their regard in the point above mentioned in the future. One came to see me alone the week before, and as he had not much the appearance of a priest, did not give him any kind of encourage-

[1] The Rev. J. Cahill, priest at Portsmouth: see vol. i., p. 306 *seq.*

ment, but I find since that he was no impostor. There are now six fixed at Slindon in a house provided for them by Lord Newburgh, who live in a kind of community. Two are settled at Arundel in lodgings, and as they are very well known to the rest 18 above mentioned and to those at Slindon, I permitted them to say prayers [mass] in my chapel. Should be much obliged to you if you would give them faculties to hear one another, for I am not Frenchman enough for that. One is called Mr. Nicholas Gerard Siffait, curé de Delalundes, diocese de Rouen, agé de 79 ans. The other is called Mr. Deschamps, Vicaire of St. Aubin for thirty years, aged between 60 and 70. An answer as soon as convenient will greatly oblige,

"Your most obedient and humble servant,

"PHILIP WYNDHAM."

Among the priests alluded to as at Slindon, four miles from Arundel, was the well-known ex-Jesuit Père Beauregard, described by one of them as "The King's Preacher, known through the whole Catholic world". He was entertained by Lord and Lady Newburgh, at Slindon House. On his arrival he went into Retreat, preparatory to devoting himself to giving the exercises to the exiled priests in the different centres where they were gathered together.

We also hear of a large group of priests at Lewes, from the letter from one of them to Dr. Douglass, asking for facilities for saying Mass. At Rumsey, near Southampton, there was a little colony to whom Milner attended; while at Winchester itself the number was already considerable. We also hear of them at Carshalton, Guildford, Farnham, and other places. Some who landed in the West, chiefly at Plymouth, found their way to Bath and Bristol. Later on, a few penetrated further inland, some as far as the Midland and Northern Districts.

The Catholic clergy in London at first showed some inclination to be less sympathetic with the exiles than the rest of the people. It appears that the new-comers used to present themselves at the churches in large numbers, in order to say Mass, and they would sometimes be rather exacting in their

requirements. It was not customary in those days for priests to say Mass daily, but it was only natural that the French priests, looking upon it as their one consolation of their exile, should wish to celebrate as often as possible. In the London churches there were no side altars, and the accommodation was hopelessly inadequate to the ever-increasing crowd of priests awaiting their turns to celebrate. Unseemly disputing took place, and this led to a coldness between the resident clergy and the new-comers.

Bishop Douglass, however, from the first showed himself as their true sympathiser and friend, and was willing to overlook such faults as they sometimes fell into, due often chiefly to ignorance of English habits which were so different from those they had been accustomed to. He made great efforts to supply their spiritual wants, giving them leave to say Mass at any private houses, wherever a room could be devoted to the purpose, and fitted up as a temporary chapel. He writes as follows in his Diary:—

"1792. I hired for them Mrs. Courtois' room and supported two altars in it for the French priests' sole use. Also another for do. at Mr. Olivier's, Pall Mall. Also paid the expenses of wax and wine in East Lane, Virginia Street, St. Patrick's, Moorfields, St. George's Fields, &c. passim, many private chapels being allowed to them."

According to a family tradition,[1] Charles Butler was one of those who exerted themselves most to provide for the spiritual wants of the sufferers. In his own house twelve French priests said Mass daily, and he gave them breakfast, knowing that in some cases it was questionable whether they would have anything further to eat until they came again the following morning. Very soon the London clergy overcame their prejudices, and joined with the laity in a supreme effort to help the exiles. The Protestants also showed their sympathy in practical fashion by the generous scale of their subscriptions. The arrangements for the collection and distribution of relief were carried out on a large and complete scale, the description of which will require a separate chapter. We can suitably end this one

[1] This was told to the present writer by His Honour the late Judge Stonor, who himself heard it when young from Charles Butler himself, who was his grandfather.

with the pastoral letter of Bishop Douglass, pleading the cause of the exiled clergy and appealing to the Catholics of London for subscriptions for their relief:—

"JOHN, *Bishop of Centuria, Vicar Apostolic,*

"TO ALL THE FAITHFUL, CLERGY AND LAITY, IN THE LONDON DISTRICT.

"DEAR BRETHREN,

"The feelings of compassion which you have shown and the corporal relief which you have given to the suffering clergy from France have filled your Pastor with joy. Flying into this country from the horrors of a most dreadful persecution, they have been received by you with all the tenderness of Christian love: they have found their bowels refreshed and their wants supplied through your charity.

"The number of these refugees having by now considerably increased, our Brethren of every denomination in religion have come forward to their support. As many as have the substance of this world are opening their bowels to them. And to you on the occasion I will say with the Apostle, 'In doing good let us not fail'. As long as you shall see your Brethren in need, continue to them your charitable assistance: continue to be merciful according to your ability.

"In cherishing them you cherish the confessors of Christ Jesus: or more, what you do to them you do to Jesus Himself (Matt. xxv.).

"Finding in this country security to their persons and relief under their distress, their hearts overflow with gratitude: and they offer up their prayers to Heaven for the hospitable land. They feel happy in experiencing your benevolence: yet how much more happy are you who exert this benevolence towards them. You remember 'the word of the Lord Jesus, how He said it is a more blessed thing to give rather than to receive' (Acts xx. 35).

"Wherefore, Brethren, persevere in the work of mercy, and let your abundance supply their want: considering the example they hold out to us, for they have not hesitated to forego every advantage of a worldly nature to preserve their consciences unstained: they have looked upon all their temporal

possessions as things of no account that they might apprehend themselves worthy ministers of the Lord.

"The grace of our Lord Jesus Christ be with you.

"JOHN, *Bishop of Centuria,*
"*Vicar Apostolic.*

"LONDON, *Oct.* 8, 1792."

CHAPTER XX.

SUBSCRIPTIONS FOR THE FRENCH REFUGEE PRIESTS.

1792-1793.

THE movement for the relief of the French clergy, like most movements of the kind, was set on foot by the personal enthusiasm of a few individuals. Of these, two stand out prominently—the Marquis of Buckingham and Mr. John Wilmot. Both were well-known men in public life. The Marquis of Buckingham's political career had come to an end in 1789, on his resignation of the post of Lord-Lieutenant of Ireland. During his residence in that country he had begun to overcome his early prejudices against Catholics: now he devoted the time of his leisure to the great work of charity to priests. Mr. Wilmot was a man of letters—a Fellow of the Royal Society, and likewise of the Society of Antiquaries. In early life he had been called to the Bar; but he never practised, and since 1776 he had been a member of the House of Commons, first representing Tiverton, then Coventry.

The first definite step to organise relief was taken by Mr. Wilmot, who called a meeting to be held at the Freemasons' Tavern on September 20, 1792, over which he presided. Thirty-one persons attended, most of them men of standing and influence. They included besides the two already mentioned, William Pitt, the Prime Minister, Edmund Burke, Sir Philip Metcalfe, M.P., Mr. William Wilberforce, M.P., three other members of the House of Commons, three Protestant clergymen, and two Catholic laymen—Messrs. J. Angerstein and R. Barnewall.[1] These formed themselves into a perma-

[1] The following is a list of the committee: Mr. John Wilmot, Chairman; Mr. Theodore J. Hester, Secretary; Right Hon. William Pitt, M.P., Right Hon. Edmund Burke, M.P., the Marquis of Buckingham, Earl FitzWilliam, Lord Onslow, Hon. R. B. Jenkinson, Sir George Baker, Sir William Scott, Sir George

nent central committee, with Mr. Wilmot as chairman, and Mr. Theodore Hester as secretary. Their number was afterwards increased to over sixty, although five were a sufficient quorum for any one meeting.

The committee proceeded to work forthwith, carrying on their undertaking in close union with the Bishop of St. Pol de Léon, who had come to town immediately that he heard of the expulsion of the clergy from France.

"His Lordship received the first intelligence of the decree whilst at Wardour," Barruel writes.[1] "The Royal Family were to visit Lulworth Castle, and the Bishop was to have the honour of being presented. He sacrifices the splendour of a Court to more important duty, and hastens to London to meet his persecuted clergy."

From that time forward we find him continually at his post. His head-quarters were at Mrs. Silburn's house in Queen Street; there he kept a register of the French clergy in England in receipt of assistance, and all the money given by the central committee passed through his hands for distribution.

The initial appeal to the English Nation issued by the committee was written by Edmund Burke.[2] Its effect was immediate. In the course of a few weeks, the subscription amounted to £33,775. Towards this sum the two largest items were £480 from the University of Oxford, and a like amount collected in the city of Bristol. Similar collections were sent from Portsmouth, Gosport and Winchester; and from Boston in the United States. We also find the Dean and Chapter of Durham, and St. John's College, Cambridge, among the subscribers. In all, there were fifty-four subscriptions of £50 or over, seven hundred and fifty of £20 or over, the rest being made up of smaller sums.

The amount subscribed was enough for the immediate needs of the exiles. At the commencement, each priest received £2

Pepperel, Revv. Charles Powlett, Walter King, J. Burgess, Dr. Jackson, Dr. Cooke, Dr. Dampier, Colonel Ironside, Dr. Laurence, Dr. Brocklesby, Messrs. Philip Metcalfe, M.P., William Wilberforce, M.P., Henry Thornton, M.P., Isaac Browne, M.P., William Baker, M.P., Thomas Astell, Culling Smith, R. Barnewall, J. Angerstein, Thomas Bernard and John Bowles.

[1] *History of the Clergy during the French Revolution*, English edition, iii., p. 220.

[2] See Appendix K.

a month, which even allowing for the difference in the value of money between then and now, was still a very small pittance; but it was enough to keep them from absolute want, especially in cases where two or three lived together, and formed a common fund. The bishops received £10 a month.

The arrangements between the central committee in London and the local committees which were formed in various provincial towns, such as Lewes, Winchester, Canterbury or Bristol, were very completely organised. Each of these committees was assisted in the administration by one of the French priests resident in the respective town, who would communicate with the Bishop of St. Pol de Léon, and receive from him all moneys for distribution.

Many individual acts of charity are also recorded. Canon Plasse does not hesitate to say that the amount of money subscribed privately, which came in without intermission during all the time of the exile, was as large as that given to the official subscriptions. A special collection was made by the Catholics; and another by the ladies of England. The University of Oxford, besides figuring largely in the subscription list, also had an edition of 2,000 copies of the *Vulgate* printed and distributed free. The Marquis of Buckingham had another 2,000 printed in like manner.

The exiles were not slow to appreciate all that was being done for them. The Bishop of St. Pol de Léon wrote a pastoral towards the end of the year 1792, which Milner translated into English, expressing his feelings of gratitude on behalf of the exiled clergy.[1] Similar sentiments were expressed in the opening paragraphs of a fly-sheet written also by the bishop, and circulated among the French clergy, entitled, "Rules of Conduct to be observed by the French Refugee Priests in England". It begins as follows:—[2]

"The first feeling with which every French priest was filled on his arrival in this hospitable land must doubtless have been an outburst of thankfulness to the God who has delivered him from all the dangers which have overtaken his unfortunate country. Every one will certainly have hastened to

[1] See *Life of Milner*, p. 48; Amherst, i., p. 214.

[2] *Westminster Archives*. The original is in French: it is translated here for convenience.

return their thanks to the God of goodness, especially by celebrating the holy sacrifice of the Mass for that intention. It was indeed a small thing for this merciful God to rescue us from the most horrible persecution which impiety has ever raised against the priesthood. The asylum to which he has led us offers to each nothing but tender and generous hearts. In the midst of this nation, once the rival of our own, who amongst us has not found friends and brethren, who hastened to recompense him for all he has suffered! On all sides there has been a concourse, an emulation among our benefactors, ever growing as our numbers and our wants multiply. Those who have no money to offer in relief of our distress have shown their interest by giving us a touching and consoling reception. So much humanity on the part of a generous nation can only be repaid by the ardour of our suffrages for her prosperity. Let us not forget this in our prayers and holy sacrifices: let us offer them to heaven for the preservation of the King and Queen and the Royal Family. Let us specially beg of God that He will ever preserve England from those principles of ungodliness, licence and anarchy which have brought on France the scourges now afflicting her. These suffrages and frequent prayers have become to us a real duty; for gratitude is such to all men. It is above all a duty to priests: it will add sweetness to our piety to pay at least this tribute of our hearts to an entire nation of benefactors."

The rules themselves are worth perusing, for they give an indication not only of the great circumspection which the exiles were urged to observe in their daily lives, but also in the particular dangers to be apprehended in consequence of their ignorance of the customs of a strange country, and the abnormal position in which they found themselves. They are indeed a tribute to the far-seeing vigilance of their author, to whose zeal and discretion the clergy were throughout so much indebted. The following is their text:—[1]

"In order above all things to avoid the failings and other evils which are caused by idleness, let us supply the place of our regular occupations by greater perseverance in prayer, and exactness in our spiritual exercises.

[1] *Westminster Archives.* As before, the original is in French, and is translated here for convenience.

"Though we have escaped the sword of the assassin, we are not yet free from the darts of calumny. We have been followed to our asylum by enemies, who already spread abroad that some amongst us accept alms of which we do not stand in need; that we even squander them on frivolous objects, and scandalous amusements. Most certainly such accusations are not worthy of belief, and we cannot persuade ourselves that any French priests would allow themselves to frequent theatres, or other public places of amusement where their presence would be a subject of scandal; but they should bear in mind that it is not in accordance with English custom to see walks prolonged however little beyond nightfall, nor long sittings in taverns in which they take their meals (and which it is to be wished they could avoid altogether), nor lastly, excursions in the streets at night time.

"With reference to a certain stamp of dress which they were forced to adopt in Paris, circumstances have rendered it henceforth not only unnecessary, but even out of place; it is therefore their duty to resume cutting their hair short; and this is the more necessary as the English have already begun to be surprised at their totally unnecessary delay in adopting a costume which among them, as among us, is distinctive of ecclesiastics; and which is most likely to shield them from insult and cause them to be respected.

"As prudence demands the greatest circumspection in our speech, it is easy to see the importance of every one abstaining from all discourse on matters relating to the government or the religion of the country which provides us with an asylum.

"As to the rites of our holy religion, it were much to be wished that all the refugee priests could be given the consolation of saying mass daily; as, however, the number of altars does not allow of this, the chaplains request those who wish to celebrate either in their Chapels or on private altars, which they are urged to multiply as much as possible, to write down their names for a fixed hour on one day a week, so that good order may be kept, and that a larger number may be enabled to profit by this facility.

"It is not only priests exiled for the Faith who should remember with what decorum and recollection they should celebrate the holy mysteries: nevertheless, any one who may have

contracted the habit of a certain precipitancy would do well to take notice that such a habit is still more blameworthy and even scandalous in a country where Catholics are accustomed to see their priests celebrate somewhat slowly and with becoming gravity.

"The clergy are requested to avoid assembling in large numbers, to go out walking not more than two or three together, and to leave the Chapels where they may have been attending Divine Service in small parties."

The cautions here given were not altogether unnecessary. In the case of some of the priests, the sympathy accorded seems to have been too much for them. The position was novel, and they allowed those who wished, to entertain them sometimes in an imprudent manner. They attended balls and other festivities, and even went to the theatre, against which there was at that time no definite law. Bishop Walmesley was constrained to issue a circular forbidding this class of recreation. Nevertheless, these acts were hardly more than indiscretions, due to want of perception or thoughtlessness. With respect to the conduct of the main body, the testimony of contemporaries is unanimous in their praise. We can appeal to Charles Butler, who knew many of them personally, and was himself living in London within a stone's throw of the centre of the emigrants in Queen Street, during all the time of the exile. No one would have been more capable of judging, both of their outward behaviour and of the attitude of the English people towards them: and he bears witness in no uncertain terms. "Thrown on a sudden," he writes, "into a foreign country differing from theirs in language, manners, habits and religion, the uniform tenour of their decorous and pious lives obtained for them universal regard. Their attachment to their religious creed they neither concealed nor obtruded. It was evidently their first object to find opportunities of celebrating the sacred mysteries, and of reciting the offices of their liturgy. Most happy was he who obtained the cure of a congregation; or who like the Abbé Carron, could establish some institution useful to his countrymen. Who does not respect feelings at once so respectable and so religious? Hence flowed their cheerfulness and serenity of mind, above suffering and want. 'I saw them,' a gentleman said to the writer of these pages,

'hurrying in the bitterest weather over the ice of Holland, when the French invaded that territory. They had scarcely the means of subsistence; the wind blew, the snow fell; the army was fast approaching; and they knew not where to hide their heads; yet these men were cheerful. They did honour to religion;—and the nation that so justly appreciated their merit did honour to itself.'"[1]

The exiled clergy came from very different ranks of life. Most of the bishops belonged to noble Royalist families, as also did some of the inferior clergy; but the majority of these were from the poorer classes. Butler calls them "the most lowly and humble of human beings, not only the friends, but the companions of the poor, who broke their bread with them, and who shared with unfeigned sympathy in all their abjection and want". All alike went through the same long and tedious trials during their exile; for no distinction of rank, except that between bishop and priest, was made in administering relief.

With respect to the lay *émigrés*, Butler bears similar testimony:—[2]

"The lay emigrants," he writes, "were chiefly composed of the provincial nobility. Their willing exertions to increase their small subsistence were truly honourable. With this view, magistrates became preceptors, painting, drawing and music were taught by ladies, who in happier hours had learnt them for ornament; the son refused no occupation which gave him the means of assisting his parent; the daughter was the maid-of-all-work to her family. It is surprising how soon they qualified themselves in one form or other for useful employments: none thought that a disgrace which attachment to his king or love of his religion made necessary."

By the exertions chiefly of Mrs. Dorothy Silburn, a chapel for the special use of the French was opened in Dudley Court (now Dudley Street), Soho: it was dedicated to the Holy Cross. There was not, however, space enough within for any large number, and on any special occasion recourse was had to one of the ordinary chapels of the metropolis. Three times during th first year a spiritual retreat was given in this manner, the French clergy attending in hundreds. Two of

[1] *Hist. Mem.*, iii., p. 328. [2] *Ibid.*

these took place in St. Patrick's, Soho; the third in the Chapel of St. George's Fields, which was one of the chief centres of the refugees. In each case the preacher was Father Beauregard. On the concluding day at Soho, Dr. Douglass himself attended, and administered Holy Communion to more than a thousand French priests.

Up to this time the Government had taken no part in paying for the support of the exiles. They did, however, address themselves to the problem of finding lodgings for them. The house at Forton, near Gosport, has already been mentioned; and there was also a large building at Guildford put at their service in a similar way. These proving inadequate, the Government offered them the use of the large unfinished "King's House," at Winchester. This was a square and spacious building begun by Charles II., but never finished, nor even used as a royal residence. During the eighteenth century, it had served at least once to receive French prisoners of war. At the time of the immigration of the French priests it was empty, and was specially suitable to become a residence for them. During all the month of October, workmen were in the house, preparing it for the reception of its new guests. Milner was at that time occupied with the building of his own church; but he found time to assist in preparing the room in the King's House which was to be used as chapel, and throughout the following years he was on intimate terms with the priests there, rendering them more than one substantial service.

The first colony of sixteen French priests arrived on November 4, 1792, conducted by the Bishop of St. Pol de Léon. From the beginning they formed themselves into a quasi-religious community, placing themselves under the government of Monsieur Martin, one of the Fathers of the Congregation of the Eudistes, formerly Superior of the Grand Séminaire at Lisieux. He became the close friend of Milner, who formed the highest opinion of his capabilities. "Everybody who sees him is in love with him," he writes,[1] "and those who know him best loved him most. It is impossible that dignity should be blended with sweetness, piety and strict discipline with courteousness, more happily in any man than in him." Under his guidance and direction, the priests dis-

[1] *Westminster Archives.*

The King's House, Winchester.

missed the servants, and undertook all the household work themselves. In this manner, and by dint of frugal living, the expenses were so reduced that according to Bishop Douglass the total cost did not exceed £1 2s. per head, every month.

The number of inmates increased rapidly. In January, 1793, there were 180; a month later 220. At this date all the priests of Forton were removed to Winchester, and this more than doubled their number. A little later again came the first contingent from Jersey, who were placed there. Milner describes the cause of their having to leave Jersey thus:[1] "A disagreeable affair, Lord Buckingham tells me, has just happened at Jersey. All the inhabitants are put under martial law; in consequence of this, the French priests are required to take up arms. This they refused to do, of course. It is then said they shall not consume the provisions of the Island. Hence it is expected they will be sent out of it."

The exodus from Jersey was, however, gradual, and continued for some years. The arrival of the first contingent brought up the number at the King's House to over 600. They followed the ordinary way of life of a seminary. Lectures in Theology were given to a few who had come over as deacons or sub-deacons,[2] and these were attended by many of the priests. Others devoted themselves to manual labour. Under the patronage of the Marchioness of Buckingham a carpet and tapestry manufactory was established, the profits of which went to the benefit of the exiles. She was herself a Catholic, and since her conversion, nearly twenty years before, she had undergone a veritable persecution at the hands of her husband on account of her religion. Indeed, except during the four years of their residence in Ireland, she had never been able to practice as a Catholic externally; the most that she was allowed was to see a priest once a year. Even when living in Winchester she could only go to Mass on Sundays secretly.[3] She naturally welcomed her husband's devotion to the suffering French clergy which was gradually to break down his pre-

[1] *Westminster Archives.*

[2] Those Seminarists not in "major orders" ceased for the time to live as clerics. It was considered unjustifiable to add to the number of the clergy unnecessarily, and all who were free to do so accordingly became laymen again until better times should arrive.

[3] See the *Rambler*, for January and February, 1855.

judices, so that we find later on some of them staying in his house at Stowe, so that Mass was celebrated under his very roof.

The religious exercises in the King's House were kept up with regularity and fervour. The Blessed Sacrament was exposed during the entire day—a form of devotion at that time hardly known in England; and continual prayer went forth to heaven from the midst of Protestant England for the welfare of Catholic France. As soon as the community were fairly established, Père Beauregard visited them, and preached the spiritual exercises. Milner attended these, and said that he found them "highly edifying and worthy of imitation in many respects". Occasionally, some in major orders would be promoted to the priesthood, but the ordinations were conducted privately, as it was considered that the English might easily resent the apparent multiplication of the French clergy whom they were supporting. Indeed, it was only those who had been deacons or sub-deacons before the general exodus from France that were ordained in England.

On the death of Louis XVI. a solemn Requiem was sung in Milner's new church, at which many of the exiles attended. Considerable curiosity was manifested in the town, and all the approaches to the little church were crowded. Only a small proportion of those who came found entrance, the church being so closely packed that there was not even standing room. Milner himself preached, and afterwards published his sermon. A similar service was held the following November for the Queen of France, which is thus described by him:—[1]

"We had a service for the French Queen last Saturday, helped by the regimental band, and attended by the Marquis and all the officers, most of the clergy, and the principal people of the city and neighbourhood. The Cenotaph was graced with a bust as large as life in chiaroscuro of the deceased, from the elegant pen of Lady Buckingham."

No charge was made by Government for the use of the King's House, but the expense of living there was defrayed out of the subscription fund. Rightly therefore in the memorial slab which was erected in 1793, and is still to be seen in the porch of the Catholic church at Winchester, Mr. John

[1] See the *Rambler*, for January and February, 1855.

Wilmot's name occupies a central position. The main subject of the address is thankfulness to King George III. and the British nation.

The fund subscribed, large as it was, did not last more than six months, and further steps had to be taken to replenish it. This time the king himself took an active interest in the work, and issued a formal letter, dated April 17, 1793, recommending the work to his people.[1] This letter was sent in the first instance to the two archbishops, of Canterbury and York, and by them forwarded to the other bishops of the establishment. It was read out in all the Protestant churches in the kingdom, and followed by a house-to-house collection during the week. The amount realised was £41,304. Throughout all this time, also, there was a steady flow of private subscriptions, which, as already mentioned, in the end came to almost if not quite as much as the contributions to the authorised list.

For the time, therefore, the committee was in a satisfactory financial condition. Nevertheless, some little difficulty was showing itself in consequence of the very multiplicity of subscriptions proceeding at the same time. One of the chief among these was raised by a committee of the merchants of London, originally formed at a meeting at the Star and Garter, Pall Mall, but which afterwards commonly met at the Marine Society's rooms in Bishopsgate Street. This committee did not limit its operations to the relief of the clergy only, but also made grants to necessitous laymen. De Lubersac[2] tells us, however, that the people were less willing to subscribe to these as many of them had left France for their own private ends, and not in consequence of any danger to their personal safety. The result was that the fund languished, and some of the clergy whom they had wholly or in part supported were thrown back on to the other committee. This made it the more clear that the collection of voluntary

[1] A French translation of this letter is given by Plasse, i., p. 246. No copy of the original seems extant. At the Record Office, the accounts of the subscriptions raised in response to the letter are preserved but not of the letter itself. Canon Plasse does not tell us where he found his copy.

[2] *Journal de l'Emigration et Deportation du Clergé de France en Angleterre*, by M. l'Abbé de Lubersac, Vicar General of Narbonne. The work was dedicated by royal permission to King George III. and was published in 1802.

subscriptions, however successfully raised, could not be more than a temporary expedient. As time went on, the funds were getting visibly lower, and the prospect of a third subscription was one not easily to be faced. Yet the number of clergy to be provided for showed little sign of diminishing, and it began to appear clear that their exile would be prolonged, for the outlook in France did not improve. Some of the French priests themselves showed in this respect an excusable inclination to be unduly optimistic. We read in Dr. Douglass's diary:—

"August, 1793. The successes of the Allied Armies and of the Royalists encourage the French Bishops and priests to go to the Austrian Low Countries, to be ready to enter France as soon as it is subdued."

These hopes, of course, turned out to be ill founded; but although many priests were induced to leave England in the summer of 1793, their places were to a great extent filled by fresh arrivals from Jersey, and the total number of refugees did not decrease substantially. At the end of August, only £21,000 remained unspent.

Under these circumstances, the committee began to turn their eyes to the Government, who did not shrink from responsibility in the matter. When Pitt stood up in the House of Commons to propose that the refugees should be assisted out of the national exchequer, not a dissentient voice was raised. From this time forward Parliament voted public money for the relief of the refugees at the rate of about £200,000 annually. No special distinction was made between priests and laymen, and a certain proportion was devoted every year to the latter. In order to arrange for the distribution of this, a committee was formed consisting of the Bishop of Montpellier and fifteen French laymen, presided over by the Baron de Renac.[1] They held their meeting at Mrs. Silburn's house, and in order to simplify working arrangements, the English committee moved its place of meeting thither also.

[1] The French committee consisted of the following: Baron de Rénac, President; Comte de Botherel, Treasurer; the Bishop of Montpellier, Comte de Coigny, Comte de la Houssaye, President de la Houssaye, Comte de Ploen, Comte de Bizien, Duc de Lorges, Baron de Suzzanet, Comte de Blangy, Vicomte de Saint-Riveul, President de Frondeville, Baron de Nantiat, and Comte de Novion.

The scale of distribution of public money is given by Bishop Douglass as follows:—

The French Bishops are allowed out of the sum annually voted by Parliament . . . . . per month	£10	0	0
The inferior Clergy	1	15	0
The General Officers and Civil Magistrates according to their rank and loyalty	3	0	0
	4	0	0
	7	0	0
	8	0	0
The laity in general	1	11	6
The Vicars General receive a douceur		10	6

The same entry gives the number of French priests in England at that date, as follows:—

In London	1,500
In King's House, Winchester	608
About England	500
In Jersey	2,200

We shall conclude this chapter with a few words describing the arrival of the first two Religious communities driven to England by the Revolution, who were to be followed by so many others during the next few years. There was, however, this essential difference, that the first comers were French, whereas all the later arrivals were English communities who had been settled on the Continent. The original arrivals were a community of Benedictine nuns, and one of Trappist monks.

The nuns came from Montargis. When the Revolution broke out they were so anxious not to disperse that they were prepared to migrate to any place, however far, where they could find an asylum. Casting their eyes around, they bethought themselves of the English convent of their order who lived at Brussels. One of their nuns had a friend among the Brussels community, and she wrote to her to ask for an asylum for all. With great charity, the Brussels nuns agreed, although they knew that they would be put to no little inconvenience, for their convent was already none too large for their own community. It had not occurred to the Montargis nuns any more than it had to the Brussels community that there could be any question of settling in England itself: the circumstances under which this unlooked-for event was brought about are contained in the following entry from the diary of Dr. Douglass:—

"In the beginning of October, 1792, Mrs. Dillon, Mrs. Neville, Mrs. Temple and a lay sister, Religious ladies of the Benedictine monastery of Montargis, passed through London with their Confessor, and went to the English monastery of the same order at Brussels. On the 17th of October the whole of the said community, 36 in number, landed from the packet boat at Brighthelmstone, were kindly received by the Prince of Wales, Mrs. Fitzherbert and others. The Prince told them it was dangerous to go to Brussels, the French threatening to invade Austrian Flanders (whither they had been invited by the English Benedictine monastery), wished them to stay in England, and promised them his protection. They came to London. I visited them at No. 28 Duke Street, Manchester Square, on the 21st, St. Ursula's day. Induced by the Prince's promises they stay in London. The elderly nuns are in another house over the way. The expense of the two houses is £7 17s. 6d. per week. Lord Onslow offers them his house near Guildford, Surrey. On the 28th of October, Sts. Simon and Jude, which fell on a Sunday, I received the renovation of their religious vows, and Père Beauregard, the famous preacher, after breakfast gave them a sermon; all this was done in their lodgings, where I said Mass on the occasion.

"1792. November. Lord Onslow shrinks from his offer. On the 21st of November, Lord Onslow withdraws his offer absolutely. No relief either from Prince or Mrs. Fitzherbert. Madame le Prieure still confides in Providence. The whole community keep up their spirits admirably. Great charities come in; on these they subsist. They think of removing to Bodney Hall (the mansion house of George Tasburgh antea Crathorne Esq.). The Mayor of Thetford writes a letter to the Right Hon. Henry Dundas, Secretary for the Home Department, against their removal, alleging that many persons, particularly the R. Catholics, were afraid disturbances would be raised by the people of Norfolk on the nuns appearing in that county. Lord Petre was at the bottom of this opposition, and the instigator of the Mayor's interference. I waited upon Mr. Nepean at the office. Mr. Dundas was absent. I explained the affair, answered the objections, pleaded for the nuns, and on his representing the case to Mr. Dundas, Mr. D. permitted the ladies to go. They settle at Bodney Hall. When this

affair was settled, Lord Petre behaved very kindly to the ladies, ordered his steward to send them greens, etc. All the families, Protestant as well as Catholic, around Bodney are remarkably fond of them. The ladies tell me they are perfectly happy."

This community never returned to France. After nearly half a century at Bodney and Heath Hall, they eventually settled in 1835 at Princethorpe, in Warwickshire, where they are to-day a still flourishing community. A result of their remaining in this country has been that they have become gradually Anglicised, for nearly all the novices have been English. Some years ago even their official constitutions were put into English. They have never forgotten the debt of gratitude which they owed to the Prince of Wales in the day of their need: a special prayer for the English royal family forms part of their daily life.

The other community to be alluded to is that of the Trappists, who on being turned out of France towards the beginning of the Revolution, found a temporary refuge in Switzerland, but afterwards removed to the Netherlands. Finding it necessary to leave there also, they came to England, where Mr. Weld took them under his protection, and gave them a house on his Lulworth estate, in order to have them near him. The following year he built them a small monastery, sufficient for their immediate wants.

The account of their arrival and a picture of the daily lives of the monks—a scene which England had not known for several centuries—can be given in Mr. Weld's own words from the two following letters which he wrote to his bishop:— [1]

MR. WELD TO BISHOP WALMESLEY.

"LULWORTH CASTLE, *October ye 17th*, 1794.

"MY LORD,

"I think it proper to acquaint your Lordship of a step I am going to take, hoping for your approbation and concurrence. The case is this. In consequence of the desire Government has of diminishing the expenses they are at in maintaining the French clergy, I have proposed to ye Committee that manage the French Clergy business to take six of

[1] *Clifton Archives*, vol. vii.

them, and give them ground enough to maintain themselves when they have got it in proper cultivation. The six I have chosen are six monks of La Trappe. Your Lordship will probably say I have made a happy choice. I am sure I think so, and feel myself much delighted with the idea. I mean to place those six for this Winter in that house that Mr. Clinton[1] inhabited, and in the course of next Summer I propose building them a mud-house and proper chapel in the middle of ye ground that I propose giving them to cultivate. I have chosen a retired valley where there is a fine spring of good water, and where they will not be overlooked by any other house. It is about a mile from ye castle, to ye left hand as you go down to ye sea. I have had ye Prior down here to look at ye spot, as also at the house I destine for them for ye Winter, both of which he likes much. He means to write to your Lordship for what he wants for himself and community in the spiritual line; I have quite set him up in the temporal way. I expect them all down here by ye end of next week. The settling of these terrestrial angels amongst us will not only I hope draw a blessing upon me and mine, but also upon ye whole district. What wonderful things daily happen! how dreadful the calamities on the Continent! We hope to hear your Lordship is perfectly recovered. We unite in begging yr. blessing. I remain, with the greatest respect and esteem,

"Your Lordship's obedient humble servant,

"THOS. WELD."

THE SAME TO THE SAME.

"LULWORTH CASTLE, *November 4th*, 1794.

"MY LORD,

"I was duly honoured with your Lordship's letter of ye 27th ult. It gave me great pleasure to find my charity to these good monks of La Trappe coincide with your ideas. They are without exception the living saints of the Church of God upon Earth, a standing miracle and proof of the efficacy of the grace of God. It is impossible they should go through with all the austerities, universal mortification of all their senses,

[1] Rev. A. Clinton, the priest who had charge of the congregation at Lulworth.

continual recollection, eternal silence, immense length of time in singing the praises of God that they do, without the particular interference of the grace of God. With all that, their looks are cheerful, you see a peace and content of mind on their countenances, that surpass all I have ever seen in any persons in my life before. The very moment they got into their house, they began their old distribution of time the same as at La Trappe itself. They were 15 hours in the choir either at vocal or mental prayer, on All Saints' day. They wear their habits in the choir, refectory and chapter house; but when they appear in public at work in ye fields or the garden, they take off their cowl, and put on a smock frock such as the carters wear in this country, and then put on a worsted wig, and a round hat, by that means they appear like any other day labourer; nobody molests them or disturbs them, everybody is edified by them, even Protestants and Methodists come under the wall to hear them sing. I think their manner of life is so striking that it will produce good effects amongst the people. I have had the thanks of the Committee for the French Clergy affairs, signed by their Secretary, for taking these good monks under my care, and as this Committee is only an agent for Government, I may say that I have the thanks of Government for this, which is a sort of sanction and protection both for them, and for me, in case of any noise being made about them. The Prior is rather a youngish man, seems to be a very sensible clever man, a vast mildness, meekness and humility in his manner of behaviour: he means to enclose a few lines in this letter to thank your Lordship for your last letter, and also to petition a favour which I have no doubt you will readily grant: it is that they may have salut and benediction in their Chapel every Sunday and Friday. I see clearly by what I have read that they live up exactly at this moment to the strictest discipline ever practised at La Trappe. I know they exceed it if anything, in particular with regard to what they drink. Formerly at La Trappe they drank Cyder; now they never touch any liquor but water, and that only at dinner, and on Sundays at Supper. They don't stand in need of any exhortations to be strict to their rule; they far exceed or at least equal anything I have read of the strictness, regularity, exterior and interior mortifications of the most austere Cenobites of the

desert in Thebais. I wish your Lordship could see them; probably you may come this way soon: we shall always be happy to see you whenever you can make it convenient. . . .

"I am, with true regard, respect and esteem,

"Your Lordship's obedient humble servant,

"THOMAS WELD."

CHAPTER XXI.

MISSION OF MONSIGNOR ERSKINE.

1793-1795.

In the Diary of Bishop Douglass, under November, 1793, we find the following entry:—

"Mr. Erskine, Promotor Fidei, commissioned by His Holiness to return thanks to His Majesty and His Majesty's Ministers, for taking the Ecclesiastical State under protection, arrived in London on Tuesday, the 12th of November, 1793 (having left Rome on the 4th of October)."

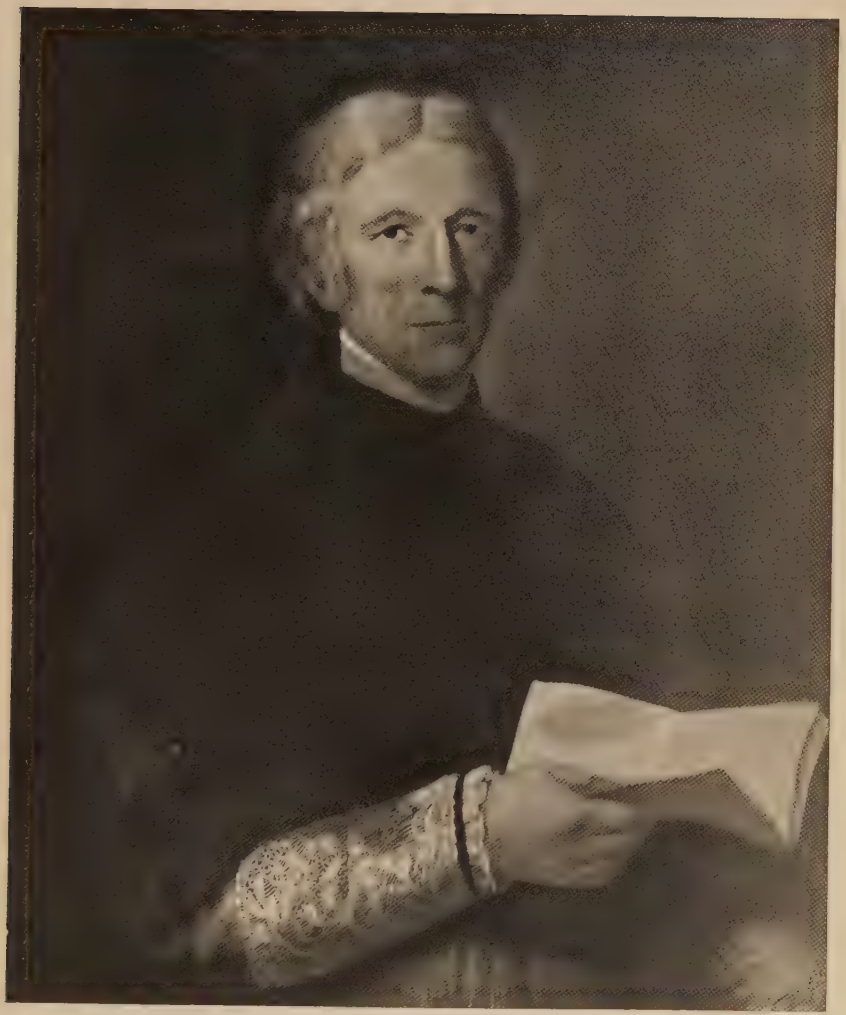
The idea of sending a special envoy from Rome to the Court of St. James at that epoch was so novel, that some account is needed of the circumstances which gave rise to Mgr. Erskine's mission, and its exact scope and object. This can be best traced by referring to the correspondence between Rev. Robert Smelt in Rome and Bishop Douglass, which is preserved among the *Westminster Archives*. From this we learn that when Mr. (afterwards Sir John) Cox Hippisley lived in Rome, some thirteen or fourteen years before this date, a great friendship had arisen between him, one Signor Campanelli, and Charles Erskine, all three being lawyers. Erskine was a Scotsman by descent on his father's side, his mother being an Italian. While quite young, he lost his father, and was adopted by the Cardinal Duke of York, who sent him to the Scots' College in Rome. Not being destined for Holy Orders, after five years' residence, he left and embraced the legal profession. He had already attained to some eminence, and was about to be married, when in the year 1782 the post of "Promotor Fidei," or "Devil's Advocate," as it is popularly called, falling vacant, the Pope, who was then at Vienna, unexpectedly offered it to Erskine, who was then forty-three years

old. This opened up the prospect of a new career. He forthwith broke off his intended marriage, became a subdeacon, and accepted a canonry of St. Peter's. He never proceeded beyond the subdiaconate, but devoted himself to a public career in Rome, his office being a well-known step towards the cardinalate. Campanelli was also successful, and was already a cardinal, with a position as "Pro-Datarius," when Mr. Hippisley was again in Rome, on a visit, in 1793. It was at this time that the idea of sending an envoy to the English Court suggested itself to Pope Pius VI.

There had already been some informal intercourse between the English royal family and the Pope. The Duke of Sussex, one of the king's sons, had been living in Rome since 1791, and had been married there during his stay. He had been a frequent visitor at the Vatican, and was on terms of friendship with the Holy Father. This paved the way towards some more formal kind of relation between the two courts, and soon an unexpected opportunity arose to bring the matter forward. This was the declaration of the English Government of their intention of protecting the Papal States from the attacks of the French, and the appearance of Lord Hood in the Mediterranean, at the head of the British fleet. Under these circumstances it was natural that the Pope should make the most of his relations with the English royal family, and should conceive the idea of sending a formal message of thanks to the King.

It was at this juncture that Mr. Hippisley appeared at the Vatican, and together with Cardinal Campanelli, held out great hopes of the success of the proposed mission. Hippisley was at that time Member of Parliament for Somersetshire. Profiting by his official position, he took it upon himself to promise a favourable reception to a Papal envoy, provided that he would act prudently. Hippisley suggested that the envoy should come in the first instance unofficially, expressing his opinion that this would be only a first step, and that they might reasonably look forward to formal and permanent diplomatic relations between the two courts at no distant date.

Mr. Hippisley further represented that Monsignor Erskine was of all men the most suited for such a mission, as he had the advantage of being a British subject. He was closely related to Lord Kellie, a Scotch peer, and the ostensible object



Monsignor Charles Erskine.

of his journey might well be to visit his family connections. This picture was an attractive one for the Pope to contemplate, and the prospect of being able to use his personal influence to bring about so desirable a result could not but give him satisfaction. Many of his advisers endeavoured to belittle the expectations he had formed, but to no purpose: he was quite determined to make the attempt.

It thus appears that Mgr. Erskine's visit to England was purely political—a fact which partly accounts for it not having been considered necessary to inform the vicars apostolic of his prospective arrival; though Antonelli himself explained the oversight by saying that till the last he had looked upon the project as chimerical, and not likely really to take place. Erskine himself, however, took quite a different view, and aimed at something far more important than being the bearer of an informal message of thanks. The possibility of a dignified and powerful position opened up before his ambitious mind, and from the first he aimed at acquiring something like the status of an apostolic nuncio.

From this, and from the fact that on his arrival in England Mgr. Erskine at once consorted with the party of the late Committee, it has been conjectured that Sir John Throckmorton, who had spent some months in Rome, was instrumental in bringing about Erskine's mission. If by this is meant that private and informal communications passed between him and Erskine, there was probably some truth in what was popularly said; but it is certain that Sir John Throckmorton was not officially concerned with the mission. Mr. Smelt says positively that although the Holy Father had shown some curiosity to see the author of the famous pamphlet in which he had been described as "a foreign Prelate," Sir John Throckmorton had refused to go to the Vatican. Indeed, after the vehemence with which he had written against the interference of the Pope in the affairs of English Catholics, any other conduct would have been manifestly inconsistent. He was a great favourite among the leading Roman families, who, according to Mr. Smelt, spoke of him as "most polite, most understanding, and, in fine, superior in all respects to any Catholic gentleman they have ever seen in Rome". During his visit he entertained on a lavish scale. Amongst other

things, he gave a banquet in the hall of the English College, to which he invited all the English who were residing in Rome, lay or ecclesiastic. On many occasions Mgr. Erskine was one of his guests, and we may well believe that as soon as there appeared a chance of his coming to England, Sir John Throckmorton would have made him acquainted with what he considered the unsatisfactory state of English Catholic affairs, and of the late disputes between the laymen and the bishops.

Before speaking of the reception which Mgr. Erskine met with in England, we must retrace our steps by a few months, and resume the narrative of English Catholic domestic concerns. We have brought this down to the conclusion of the Mediation. The untoward way in which it ended was not entirely without its advantages, for it left the bishops freer than they would otherwise have been in dealing with any further action of the laity which might deserve censure. There was one such already awaiting their consideration, namely Sir John Throckmorton's book on the elections of bishops, which was published shortly before his departure for the Continent. Milner was indeed preparing an answer to it, as he had to the original pamphlets, in a book of over 300 pages, which he entitled *Ecclesiastical Democracy Detected*, but the bishops considered that their own formal condemnation ought to be issued first. Three of them met in London on August 25, 1792, to consult about the matter: Bishop Talbot as before refusing to take part in the proceedings. Milner attended, and at the request of the bishops, he drew up a pastoral, which was dated December 26, 1792, and issued early in the following month. Great care was taken to conceal the authorship, in view of the strained relations still subsisting between Milner and the late Committee, and, in fact, no one at the time suspected that he had written it. The pastoral ran to twenty-seven pages. After a full explanation of the circumstances which gave rise to it, twelve statements were cited from Sir John Throckmorton's book, and condemned as "false, erroneous, scandalous, injurious to the Head of the Church, and to a general Council, subversive of ecclesiastical discipline, tending to schism, favouring heresy, inducing to schism and heresy, schismatical, contrary to a formal definition of a general council, and to the faith of the

Church"—a series of censures which, to a lay mind, seem somewhat redundant.

The pastoral was signed by the three vicars apostolic. To the last they hoped that Bishop Talbot would join with them. His name appears to have been set up in type, and only removed at the last moment, for a large space where it would have been at the beginning and end of the pastoral—which an intelligent printer might easily have avoided—called general attention to its absence. It may be well to give his own account of his reasons for refusing to sign. These he wrote in answer to Bishop Douglass's invitation, in the following terms:—[1]

"LONGBIRCH, *Dec.* 24, 1792.

"MY LORD,

"Shall Peace, Concord and Charity never prevail any more in our small body? And when contentions and animosities seem in a great measure to have subsided, and when blameable and even reprehensible writings seem to be forgotten, and not read by anybody, will it answer the end proposed to call them from their obscurity to bring them again to light, and set scribblers to blow up again the coals of dissension and malevolence? I thought we both of us pledged ourselves to suppress to the utmost of our power all future bickerings and writings, and shall we begin, when nothing fresh or new calls us forth, to sound a fresh alarm, and to provoke an irascible race and to invite contentions &c. and disputes which probably will be without end or advantage? It is painful to me to differ in opinion with you and the rest of my Confreres, but as times are, I see no good likely to proceed from the measure proposed, and think much evil may ensue. I have given my mind candidly and am very respectfully,

"Your most obedient humble servant,

"THO. TALBOT."

A short time after the issue of the pastoral, a general meeting of the Catholic body was called together, in order to vote an address to the King. The occasion which suggested it was the tragic fate of Louis XVI. which seemed to call for

[1] *Westminster Archives.*

a counter declaration of loyalty to the Crown in England. It was moreover considered that this was a favourable opportunity for Catholics to express their appreciation of the benefits which they had received by the late Act in their favour, and those who were hoping for further relief naturally wished not to be behindhand in showing gratitude for what they had already obtained. The meeting was held at the Freemasons' Tavern, on February 21, 1793. As it was the first gathering of the kind since the Mediation, some anxiety was felt that it should pass off harmoniously. On the whole, the result was re-assuring. The following short account sent by Bishop Douglass to Bishop Walmesley the next day, gives a vivid idea of what took place :—[1]

"My Lord,

". . . I attended the meeting yesterday. The Earl of Shrewsbury declining the chair, it was moved by Lord Petre, and instantly carried, that Bernard Howard should take it. The Address was read—Title 'The Address of the Catholic Peers, Commoners, &c.' After the whole was read (which I found to be an expression of our attachment to the King and Government, of our abhorrence of seditious doctrines and practices, with a wish to serve the cause more effectually, *viz.* by the opening of the Army and Navy, &c.) I stepped to Lord Petre, and asked why the Clergy were not mentioned. His Lordship replied, because it was a tender of services, &c. I rejoined, why then were we so pressingly invited, if we were to have no share in the Address? His lordship answered that they wished to have the advice of the clergy. I urged that the Address was expressive of attachment to His Majesty, and of abhorrence of seditious principles, &c. as well as a tender, &c. However, I returned to my former place, told what I had done, and Mr. F. Plowden moved that the Clergy should be included. He was seconded by the Rev. Mr. Adams, and indeed by the great body of the Meeting, which was numerous. Sir H. Englefield, Lord Petre, Howard jun. of Corby, Rev. Mr. Collins, Rev. Dr. Bellasyse and others spoke against the motion. Rev. Mr. Archer, Rev. Mr. Gregg, and another or two for it. Lord

[1] *Clifton Archives*, vol. vi.

Petre seemed to be candid in all the different times he spoke, said he was willing to sacrifice his opinion to the sense of the meeting, for that we must have unanimity. The confusion increasing, and the general murmur being for the clergy, the Chairman called for my opinion. I arose and gave my opinion decidedly for the clergy being included; it was accordingly carried, and the title now runs thus: 'The Address of the Catholic Peers, Clergy and Commoners &c.'

"The next motion was that Lord Petre and Sir H. Englefield, I believe, should carry up the Address. This also was opposed, Lord Petre being obnoxious to Government. Lord Shrewsbury was proposed by Mr. F. Plowden, but he declined. For Lord Arundell, nobody would vouch that he would accept the honour. After some altercation, in which many spoke pro and con, the first motion was carried with this amendment that the Chairman was added to the other two. So the Meeting closed.

"I have signed your name and that of Bishop Gibson.

Ever yours &c.

"J. DOUGLASS."

The text of the Address was as follows:—

"TO THE KING'S MOST EXCELLENT MAJESTY.

"The Humble Address of the Catholic Peers, Clergy and Commoners, of your Kingdom of Great Britain.

"MOST GRACIOUS SOVEREIGN,

"We, your Majesty's dutiful and loyal Subjects, the Catholic Peers, Clergy and Commoners of your Kingdom, of Great Britain, beg leave to approach your royal presence at a time when the disastrous Events in the neighbouring Kingdom have nearly involved all Europe in the calamities of a War, to assure your Majesty of our most loyal and unfeigned attachment to your Majesty's Person, Crown and Dignity, to the Constitution of our Country, and of our utter Abhorrence of all Principles subversive of Order and Government, and tending to promote Anarchy and Confusion.

"Deeply sensible of the manifold blessings which we enjoy under the clemency of your Majesty's Government; attached

by new ties of Gratitude and Affection to our country by the favour which the Legislature has lately conferred on us, we still have to lament that the delicacy of our Situation leaves us no other means of manifesting our zeal to your Majesty and our wishes to serve our Country except the sincere assurance that we shall ever be ready in our respective situations with our lives and fortunes to co-operate with our fellow-subjects in the defence and support of your Majesty's Person and the Constitution of these Realms, in any manner which your Majesty's Government shall deem expedient."

In the above meeting we miss the name of Sir John Throckmorton, who was still abroad. He returned to England in the course of the month of August, 1793, and an additional question of difficulty at once arose, for he offered Rev. Joseph Berington the post of chaplain at Buckland, which the latter accepted. This brought him into the London District, and Dr. Douglass, considering that his writings were unorthodox, refused to admit him. Berington had recently published his well-known *Memoirs of Panzani*, with an Introduction and Supplement, dealing in all with Catholic history from the time of Elizabeth to his own day. He wrote these in his usual flippant style, and in the course of argument, renewed Sir John Throckmorton's contention that the Oath of Supremacy was capable of being interpreted in an orthodox sense, quoting in corroboration a book recently written by Mr. Francis Plowden, entitled *Jura Anglorum*. He called upon Catholics to act on this theory. "One bold man taking the Oath," he wrote, "may dissipate the whole charm of prejudice, and restore us to the most valuable privilege of British Citizens."

The proposal made by Bishop Walmesley that the vicars apostolic should take formal notice of this exhortation, again brought Bishop Talbot to the fore. "I do not mean to become the apologist for Mr. Joseph Berington," he wrote,[1] "or to take on me the defence of any extravagant notions he may have adopted; but I must own from the references made in your letter, I see nothing like the inference you draw. Without abetting any wrong opinion Mr. Berington may have broached, and without pretending to exculpate him from censure when he deserves it, I consider him as a man of learning, and as a

[1] *Clifton Archives*, vol. vi.

Sir John Throckmorton, Bart.

person very regular and even exemplary in the exercise of his missionary functions. He is ready, as he declares, to explain or even to retract what may be deemed amiss in his writings. Why, then, must he be run down like a wild beast? and now that the conflagration seems to be over, why light up a new one?"

In the end the bishops did not take any definite step to condemn the book, leaving it to the Rev. Charles Plowden to write an answer, which he did in his usual vigorous language.[1] Some correspondence passed with Rome in respect of Mr. Berington and his writings. Propaganda curiously confused him with his cousin, Bishop Charles Berington, and the case of both of them became intricately involved in consequence.

The question of Joseph Berington going to Buckland brought out clearly the inadequacy of the existing rules for the conduct of the mission. It was in fact a test case, in which the squire and the bishop were brought face to face, in a manner which had often been foreseen as possible, and the difficulty had now arisen in its most aggravated form. Neither party was willing to give way. The only power that Dr. Douglass had was to refuse faculties; but Joseph Berington came notwithstanding, and lived at Buckland. He contended that Bishop Douglass could not exclude him, and could not refuse him permission to say Mass privately without alleging some canonical fault. Sir John Throckmorton, on the other hand, asserted his own position by giving Berington the use of the priest's house, and paying him a salary. Thus the mission was served by a priest without faculties, while at stated intervals, Rev. Charles Addis, who was chaplain at the neighbouring mission of East Hendred, came over to hear Confessions. This

[1] The following extract from a letter written many years afterwards by the Rev. Mark Tierney to Dr. Kirk, seems worth quoting as bearing on the Rev. Charles Plowden's answer to Berington. The original is among the Archives at St. Edmund's College. He writes as follows:—

". . . You will recollect that Charles Plowden, who had publicly treated the Memoirs of Panzani as a forgery, in a private letter to Mr. Talbot, which is in your Collectanea, acknowledges that he subsequently found the original MS., but adds that both Dodd and Berington had been guilty of suppressions which totally altered the character of the work. This is false. . . . I have Dodd's own copy (in his own handwriting) of the translation of the MS. It is the same in all respects as that published by Mr. Berington, and contains every syllable that is to be found in the Latin original."

state of things was still continuing when Mgr. Erskine arrived in England, and was a powerful argument for the need of fresh legislation for the English mission, in view of the change of circumstances of recent years. It presented a question which a politician of the stamp of Mgr. Erskine could not but recognise as an opportunity for his intervention.

Nevertheless, it must be confessed that Erskine did not begin his work prudently. "Never man blundered so much as he has done," was Dr. Douglass's comment. "He has given himself to the Cisalpines, to Lord Petre, Chairman of the Whig Club, and to Sir John Throckmorton, Chairman of the Society of the Friends of the People, two gentlemen who I know are very obnoxious to Government." On November 25, when Erskine had already been in England a fortnight, a banquet was given in his honour at the Freemasons' Tavern, by Lord Petre and Sir John Throckmorton, which was largely attended; but none of the clergy were invited, and so far, he had not called upon or seen Bishop Douglass. At length, after having waited in vain for a visit, Dr. Douglass determined to take the initiative, "in order" (as he expressed it) "to prevent any malignant accounts being sent to Rome to the prejudice of us Bishops". He accordingly called at Mgr. Erskine's lodgings, 27 Great Maddox Street, in the afternoon of Wednesday, November 27. The description of the interview can be given in his own words, from a letter which he wrote to Bishop Walmesley the next day:—[1]

"On Wednesday I called upon Monsignor Erskine. After first compliments, he began to make apologies for not having called upon me, *viz.*, that he wished to be recovered from the fatigue of his journey, that the town was immense, that he had indeed seen a few people, by accident as it were, and suchlike vain excuses. We then conversed on the climate of England, &c., hujusmodi. In the midst of the conversation, he rose up, went to the bureau in the room, opened a packet, and delivered to me the following letter from Cardinal Antonelli:—

[Here follows a copy of Cardinal Antonelli's letter of introduction.]

"I perused this letter, made no tender of service, but con-

[1] *Clifton Archives*, vol. vi.

tinued the uninteresting conversation a little longer, then rose. He begged my address: I gave him a card with my address, and retired. There was another gentleman in the room all the time."

The following day Mgr. Erskine returned the call, and again the account of the interview can be given in Dr. Douglass's own words, this time taken from his Diary:—

"On the day following Mgr. Erskine called on me in Bedford Street, where I then lodged with my brother. After first compliments, our conversation turned upon political affairs in this kingdom. He complained of the Ministry being timid, of their being afraid of opposition, &c. I defended the Ministry, the propriety of their being cautious, and explained to him the dangers that threatened Government and the peace of the Kingdom from the Jacobin principles of certain men, and of the attempts that had actually been made to introduce anarchy, overturn Government, &c. I collected from his conversation that he had not met with that introduction to the Ministry that he had been led to hope for. I told him all my conversations with the Ministry on the political business of His Holiness had been always held and everything transacted in secret.

"Our conversation then turned on the disputes we have had with the late Committee. He insisted, *i.e.* urged much on our making peace, said his Holiness wished us to promote peace, &c. I answered no one, not even the Holy Father himself, could wish for peace more than we Bishops, and that we only wanted peace to be established on the sound principles of religion. I explained to him the grounds of our opposition; took the Blue Books; we read over the Oath which the Committee had proposed, and which we condemned. I pointed out each obnoxious clause, and asked what he thought of them. He showed himself hurt, and declared that the Oath could not be taken.

"We then read the Protest and Appeal which the Committee had drawn up. After reading about half of that instrument, he started up, shut the book and said 'this is too bad'. I reasoned a little on the necessity we were under of opposing these gentlemen, then got him to sit down again, and I opened the Blue Book, and he read the Appeal through, then started

up again, and said it was too bad. I again argued, and put the question to him what he thought of such conduct, and of such an instrument. He replied with apparent animosity, 'It is too bad; but pray endeavour to have peace,' he added. I replied as before, and said it was an object that lay near our hearts, but that there was such a thing as a pax mala, &c. I asked him if he had read our Pastoral, and what he thought of Sir John Throckmorton's writings, &c. He answered that he had read it, and that Sir John was very sorry he had printed, and would not write any more. (This pastoral was sent to Cardinal Antonelli, was translated into Italian, much circulated and praised at Rome.) I said that was not sufficient, he ought to recall those doctrines. Here Mr. Erskine again broke forth into his prayer for peace. I seconded his wishes, and desired him to attempt it. He said he would, as he was going down to Sir John Throckmorton's, if I wished it, but he was not commissioned to meddle in our disputes. I again asked what he thought of the writings of Sir John and of the Committee and their friends. He replied he was not a theologian. I said, 'You are Promotor Fidei, &c.' Our conversation lasted about two hours. He promised me another conversation on these affairs at parting."

The above account indicates clearly enough the position at which Mgr. Erskine was aiming during his stay in England. On questions involving relations with the Holy See, his constant correspondence with important persons in the Roman Curia enabled him at times to assert his position as intermediary. In connection with the settling of the colleges in England, to be described in a subsequent chapter, he took a somewhat prominent part in the negotiations; but on the whole, though he stayed several years in England, his influence on Catholic affairs was not at any time great. Neither Milner nor Charles Butler in their printed *Memoirs* even mention his visit; a fact which is in itself sufficient to show that no great importance was attached to it.

With respect to the specific object about which Mgr. Erskine came, he was at first unsuccessful. It had been expressly stipulated that he was not to be received in a public character: yet from the above account, it is clear that he was disappointed at not being accorded a formal reception. On December 13

he left London for Scotland, to visit his relations, as had been arranged: up to that time he had not succeeded in being presented to the King, or received by any of the prominent ministers except Lord Grenville with whom he had a private interview lasting less than a quarter of an hour. On January 17 he returned to London, in company with his cousin, Lord Kellie, who secured for him the desired presentation to the King; and after that, he went to Court several times. His position was so far unofficially acknowledged that he was allowed at all times to dress in black, though he appeared in lay clothes, and carried a sword. According to his own account the King was much diverted by the popular title of Mgr. Erskine's office—"The Devil's Advocate"—and also wondered that having always lived abroad, he had nevertheless a good knowledge of the English language, which he had learnt at the Scots' College in Rome. The King was also much pleased with Mgr. Erskine's description of London. "In London," he said, "I find a city without limits, a population without numbers, and riches which overflow into the public streets." [1]

It is hardly necessary to add that Mgr. Erskine did not succeed in bringing the re-opening of diplomatic relations between England and the Holy See any nearer. In a letter to Bishop Douglass, dated July 15, 1794, Milner quotes the estimate of the Marquis of Buckingham on Erskine's mission, which may be taken as that of the average Englishman who was in a position to judge. "I spent a day or two last week" (Milner writes) [2] "at the Marquis of Buckingham's house at Weymouth, where some conversation passed as to Mr. Erskine. He said this Gentleman was here in an awkward situation, doing neither good nor harm; that the boasted letters he received from Lord Grenville previously to his arrival were no more than a passport. He avowed, however, that since English troops of horse had been employed and rendered good service at Rome, a political flirtation (as he called it) had taken place between the two Courts."

It had not of course been intended that Mgr. Erskine should make a long stay in England: the fact that he did so was due to a variety of causes. His promotion early in the

[1] See *Memoirs of Cardinal Erskine*, p. 132.
[2] *Westminster Archives.*

year 1794 to the office of "Uditore" to the Pope placed him on the high road to the cardinalate; but the death of his great friend Cardinal Campanelli the following February not only weakened his influence in Rome, but made him less willing to return there. He was therefore ready to undertake any diplomatic mission elsewhere. At first an opening seemed likely to arise, for a conference of plenipotentiaries of the chief European Powers was projected, with a view to putting an end to the war, and Mgr. Erskine was formally deputed to act as the Pope's representative, by a letter from Cardinal Zelada, Secretary of State, dated June 6, 1795;[1] but the conference never took place, and in the event, Mgr. Erskine remained in England another seven years.

[1] *Memoirs of Cardinal Erskine*, p. 135.

CHAPTER XXII.

THE CISALPINE CLUB.

1792-1830.

ALLUSION has already been made to the action of some of the members of the late Catholic Committee in forming themselves in April, 1792, into the Cisalpine Club, which has become celebrated in connection with the Catholic history of this period. It had a continuous existence under its original name for nearly forty years, until Catholic Emancipation had been passed, and then reforming itself under the name of the Emancipation Club, continued another seventeen years before finally dissolving. In view of the importance of the influence which it exerted in Catholic affairs, at least during its earlier years, some account of its rise and progress is necessary. The Minute book and accounts are still preserved,[1] and these together with many contemporary letters, will furnish the requisite details.

It has been customary to look upon the Cisalpine Club as the virtual continuation of the Catholic Committee. This, however, conveys an inadequate and misleading idea of its position. From the first its members disclaimed any kind of representative character, as Milner himself admits. And although all the members of the Committee were invited to become "original members" of the Club, by no means all of them accepted the invitation, and those who did so, found themselves only a small minority—less than a fifth—of the total number.

The first meeting of the Club was held at the Freemasons' Tavern on April 12, 1792, Mr. Henry Clifford being in the

[1] They are in the possession of Mr. Philip Witham of Gray's Inn Square, who has kindly placed them at the disposal of the present writer.

chair. Thirteen were present, of whom five—Lord Petre, Sir John Throckmorton, Sir Henry Englefield, Mr. Charles Butler and Rev. Joseph Wilkes—had been on the old Committee. The others included besides the chairman, Hon. Charles Dormer, Hon. Robert Petre, Sir Walter Blount, and Messrs. G. Heneage, Henry Errington, G. Courtenay and William Cruise. At this meeting the rules were drawn up. From these we learn that the intention was to hold five meetings annually, all in the months which formed the London season, that is from February to June inclusive, and every meeting was to begin with a dinner. Each member in rotation was to act as chairman.

Three more meetings were held within the next few weeks, and the number of members enrolled was forty-two. Three additional members of the Committee joined the Cisalpine Club—Sir William Jerningham and Messrs. Thomas Hornyold and John Towneley. It will thus be seen that four declined to join—*viz.*, Bishop Thomas Talbot, Bishop Berington, Lord Stourton and Mr. Fermor.[1] Those who did not belong to the Committee included some influential names. In addition to those mentioned above, we find the Earl of Shrewsbury, the Earl of Fingall, Sir Henry Swinburn, Messrs. Walter Smythe, Thomas Langdale, Edward Blount, Henry Witham, Basil Fitzherbert, William Throckmorton, Henry Howard, George Petre, William Plowden, Edward Howard, Thomas Stapleton, Francis Canning, etc. The clergy were admitted on the same terms as the laity, and three priests belonged to the Club—Rev. Joseph Wilkes, mentioned above, Rev. J. Collins, D.D., and Rev. C. Bellasyse, D.D. Mr. Henry Clifford was elected secretary and treasurer for the first three years, after which Mr. Cruise succeeded him.

It is curious that the rules give no indication of the object for which the Club was formed. If we had nothing further to guide us, we should take it for a mere dining club. Its name and history, however, created suspicion from the first, and the part its members took in Catholic affairs tended to confirm this. We meet with a curious instance of this feeling before the Club had been in existence much more than a

[1] Lord Clifford had resigned his seat on the Committee in 1790, at which date he was still abroad, in a very bad state of health. He eventually died on January 15, 1795.

twelvemonth. One of the questions which had come before them was the position of Catholics with respect to the East India Company. A bill was before Parliament to grant a renewal of their charter, and the question was raised whether Catholics could not obtain the insertion of a clause removing the disabilities which were popularly supposed to debar them from holding office or employment under the Company. It was referred to the legal members of the Club, who reported that no such disabilities in fact existed. This report was printed and circulated for the benefit of Catholics generally. Among those to whom it was sent was Mr. Weld of Lulworth, who forthwith wrote the following answer, under date June 20, 1794:—

"SIR,

"I did not receive yours of the 4th till yesterday, otherwise I should have given a more early answer. I neither know nor wish to know who are the members that compose this Cisalpine Club; but be they who they may, I shall never acknowledge any authority in any club under such a denomination, or allow them to act for me or in my name under any pretence whatever. I must therefore intreat you not to give yourself the trouble of sending me any more of their letters, for I mean to have no correspondence with that Club.

"I am, Sir,

"Your obedient humble servant,

"T. WELD."

To this Mr. Henry Clifford sent the following reply:—

"SIR,

"I have received your very polite letter of the 20th inst. in answer to mine of the 4th, which required none, as it merely contained information relating to ye admissibility of Catholics into the East India Company.

"I should not have troubled you again, as you wish to drop all further correspondence (a wish, I assure you, in perfect correspondence with my own), was the Club to meet any more this year. But its meeting will not be till February, when I

shall not omit to lay your letter before it, and enter it in ye minutes of ye day.

"In the meantime, Sir, I beg leave as an individual member to set you right in one particular. The Cisalpine Club since its institution has never acted, or taken upon itself to act, for or in the name of any set of men or individuals whatsoever who were not members of it.

"I am, &c.

"HENRY CLIFFORD."

Several other questions of some importance to Catholics occupied the attention of the Cisalpines during the early years of the Club's existence. One of these—the preparation of an Address to the King—has already been alluded to. Another was the illegal action of certain constables in Staffordshire, who had continued to report the existence of "Papists or reputed Papists," even after the passing of the late Act. Another question—that of the desirability of establishing a Catholic public school in England,—led to more definite results, and calls for a detailed account.

It will be remembered that when the scheme was first propounded it had been opposed by Sir John Lawson and others in the North, and in consequence fell to the ground. Since then, however, the progress of the Revolution in France had materially changed the state of the case. The position of the foreign colleges had become critical: some action seemed called for, and it was natural that the old scheme should be revived. At a meeting of the Cisalpine Club on March 12, 1793, a committee was appointed to examine the question and report. The committee consisted of eight—Lord Petre, Mr. Towneley, Rev. C. Bellasyse, Mr. W. Cruise, Sir Henry Englefield, Mr. Errington, Rev. J. Collins and Mr. W. Throckmorton. They handed in their report on April 9, when the following resolutions were passed:—

"1. That a public school, solely appropriated to the education of Catholic boys, and totally unconnected with any Protestant school, be established as soon as possible.

"2. That the school be under the direction of a certain number of Roman Catholic noblemen and gentlemen, to be

called Governors, who shall originally be elected by the subscribers, and that all future Governors shall be chosen by the surviving Governors.

"3. That the school shall be under the immediate direction of and arrangement of two Head-masters, to be called the President and Vice-President, who shall be always priests and be appointed by the Governors."

On June 4, the School Committee brought up their final report, together with a draft constitution for the proposed establishment, and careful estimates of income and expenditure. The report began in the following terms:—

"Your Committee having enquired into the present education of the Catholic youth of this kingdom, find that there are a few private schools in England,[1] but that no public establishment has been formed since the Reformation, because the penal statutes rendered such establishment illegal.

"Your Committee further observe that in the present state of things, both at home and abroad, it would be advisable not to trust entirely to foreign establishments for the education of the Catholic laity, and as the repeal of the Penal Laws now enables the Catholics to have schools at home, they conceive that a public establishment in England for the education of the Catholic laity would be of infinite service."

The draft Constitution follows. It was desired that the proposed school should not be professedly connected with the Cisalpine Club, so as to avoid restricting its scope in any way. The number of governors was fixed at fifteen. Notwithstanding the recommendation that the president should be elected by these, the Cisalpines did in fact choose a candidate for the post in the first instance. This was the Rev. John Bew, D.D., formerly president of the English Seminary at Paris, who had returned to England at the outbreak of the Revolution. He was a man of considerable ability and refinement, and in many ways well qualified for the post; but although he had not been personally concerned in the late disputes in the Catholic body, it was known that his sympathies were on the side of the Cisalpines rather than of that of the Vicars Apostolic.

[1] Berington enumerates three boarding schools in 1780—Sedgley Park, Old Hall Green and Edgbaston (afterwards removed to Baddesley Clinton)—besides a few day-schools (*State and Behaviour*, p. 168).

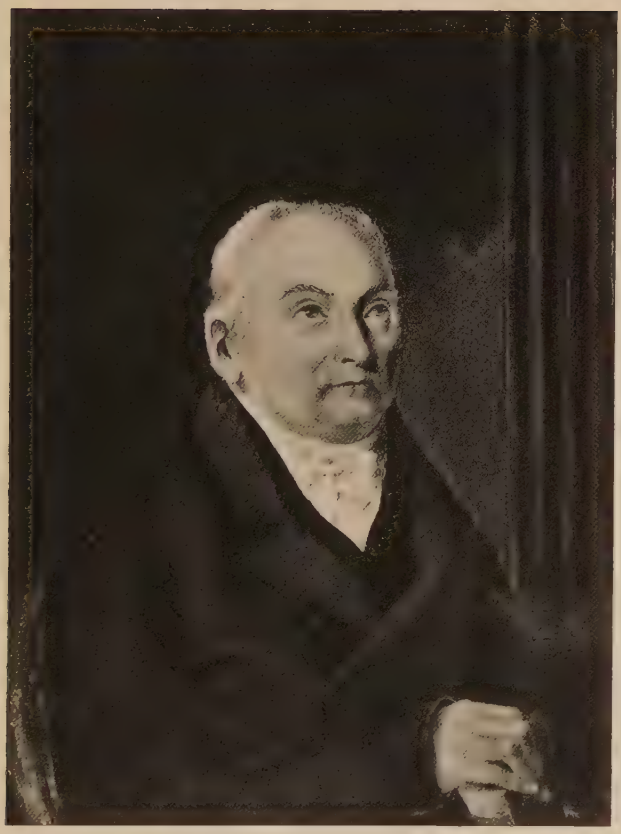
Having proceeded thus far, the Cisalpines passed the following resolution:—

"This Club conceiving itself no further concerned in this measure than merely introducing it to the attention of the Catholics at large, returns thanks to the Gentlemen of the said Committee for the pains they have taken, and declares the further prosecution of the measure now to rest solely with the subscribers."

The Catholic gentry were not slow to come forward with subscriptions, and a board of governors was elected, numbering fourteen, of whom ten were members of the Club.[1] They communicated with Dr. Bew who entered heart and soul into the scheme. A plan was drawn out and printed, in which we find Rev. Thomas Potts as vice-president, and Revv. John Wright and John Carter as masters. All of these were in general sympathy with the Cisalpines, the last two being members of the "Staffordshire Clergy". The school itself was to be in the county of Stafford: it was said that Mr. Clifford of Tixall had a house in view for the purpose in the neighbourhood of Lichfield, and Bishop Talbot was willing for it to be in his district.

The other three vicars apostolic were opposed to the whole project, looking upon it as entirely bound up with the Cisalpine Club, and considering it a further attempt on the part of certain laymen to encroach upon the domain of the bishops. It was, however, difficult for them to make their opposition felt, except perhaps by the moral force of any protest which they might think well to make. This seems to have been in Dr. Walmesley's mind when he wrote, "the four Vicars Apostolic ought to be consulted on setting up a school for the whole nation, and upon the nomination of the President of it. . . . If the Cisalpines" (he added) "should force upon us such a school, we should have a right, I think, to admonish by a short pastoral letter the Catholic gentry that the school had not received our approbation, and that therefore we could not recommend it."

[1] The following is the list: Members of the Cisalpine Club—the Earl of Shrewsbury, Lord Petre, Sir Walter Blount, Sir William Jerningham, Sir John Throckmorton, Sir Henry Englefield, Hon. C. Dormer, Hon. R. Petre, Mr. Bernard Howard, and Mr. H. Swinburn. Non-members—Lord Stourton, Lord Clifford, Mr. Thomas Clifford and Mr. Peregrine Towneley.



Rev. John Bew, D.D.

After all, however, by what he considered a fortunate providence, Bishop Walmesley found it in his power to make an active opposition to the proposed foundation, for Dr. Bew happened at that time to be working in the Western District. This was indeed accidental. By right he belonged to the London District; but in consequence of having opposed Dr. Douglass at the meeting in June, 1791, he had left the South, and had accepted from Mr. Giffard of Chillington a post as chaplain at Nerquis, in Flintshire. Dr. Walmesley saw here his opportunity. In response to Dr. Bew's letter asking permission to leave the district, he wrote expressing his disapproval of the whole scheme. Dr. Bew replied at length, explaining that the proposed foundation could by no means be considered a Cisalpine concern, as the governors were elected by all the subscribers, whether members of the Cisalpine Club or not, and the internal details were left entirely in his hands. His expostulation, however, was fruitless, and only produced the following brusque answer:—

"SIR,

"I received your second letter of July 15, but I cannot give my consent to your accepting charge of the new-projected school.

"I am, with all good wishes,

"Yours &c.

"CHARLES WALMESLEY.

"*August* 2, 1793."

A further expostulation made by Bishop Talbot himself brought no better result, and here the matter rested for a time: the scheme remained in abeyance, until a few months later, when it was re-started in a somewhat different form, and with no direct reference to the Cisalpine Club.

We must now turn to another subject which occupied the attention of the Cisalpine Club during the early years of its existence. This is the acrimonious dispute which took place between them on the one side, and Revv. J. Milner and Charles Plowden on the other, respecting the authenticity of the Protestation deposited in the British Museum. Milner first called

it in question in his *Ecclesiastical Democracy Detected*, published in 1793, where he maintained that Charles Butler had substituted a copy in place of the original. Father Plowden made a similar accusation in his answer to Berington's *Memoirs of Panzani;* and both Milner and Charles Plowden went to great pains in order to prove their singular allegation.

It is difficult to see what the object of the whole discussion could have been, for neither Milner nor Charles Plowden maintained that there was any substantial difference between the Museum copy, if it was a copy, and the original. The discrepancies alleged by Milner were of a trifling kind—as, for example, that the paragraphs were numbered with Arabic numerals instead of Roman, or that the arrangement of the capital letters did not agree, or that there were small variations of wording.[1] The most serious of these ever alleged in the text was between two versions of a statement repudiated, one being that "Faith is not to be kept with heretics," the other that "No faith is to be kept with heretics". Considering that the sense throughout is untouched, it seems really of very small importance whether the parchment at the Museum is or is not that on which it was first written. Moreover, no motive was ever suggested, and it is difficult to imagine any, which could have induced Butler to make the change.

It is probable that Milner's chief object in raising the controversy was to discredit his opponents by any means within his power. In his subsequent writings he frequently alludes to the Museum document as a "spurious copy," "the false Instrument," or a "forgery," or other such titles; and he seems to have considered that he succeeded in weakening the public confidence in Charles Butler by his action.

Charles Plowden, however, was ready to go further than this. "In such a case," he wrote, "the difference between an original and even a true copy is of infinite consequence: but if there be but a comma changed, then it is a false copy, and every man will surely tear his name from it."[2] In a letter to Bishop Douglass, he puts his point even more definitely. "If

[1] Charles Butler was, for so literary a man, a strangely careless copyist. In the *Blue Books* small errors, such as those alluded to by Milner, abound. Even in his *Historical Memoirs* there are quite a number of misprints.

[2] *Remarks on Memoirs of Panzani*, p. 44.

people are at length convinced," he writes, "that the Museum Deed is not the original, I hope your Lordship will engage a certain number of your friends to re-demand their signatures from Dr. Morton,[1] and if he should refuse them, to present to him a simple declaration that they never subscribed the Deed which is consigned to his care. An example of this sort, given by your Lordship and a dozen other priests, or laymen, will go further than all that I can write to annihilate the credit of the Deed."

"My motives for printing the letter," he proceeds, "are (1) to afford a fair opportunity to Catholics to withdraw their signature from an instrument which will otherwise stand to posterity liable to a thousand false inferences; and when the explanations under which it was admitted are forgotten, will persuade our successors that the Catholic Catechism was not understood in 1789. (2) To leave those who will come after us a proof that their predecessors were misled by a few artful and designing men. It will be more generally known hereafter than it is at present that the Protestation and the Oath were contrived not for the benefit of Catholics, but merely to open the doors of Parliament to a few great men, and the bar to a few lawyers."[2]

Even if the Museum document had been conclusively proved to be a copy, even a careless copy, it is surely difficult to follow Mr. Plowden's deductions, or even to think that he could have meant them to be taken quite seriously. The Cisalpines, however, considered their honour to be at stake, and defended themselves with vigour. The controversy is but weary and fruitless reading; but so much time and labour were devoted to it that some short account of it is called for. Soon after the question had been raised, in April, 1794, the Cisalpine Club deputed those "Gentlemen of the Law" among their members to investigate the matter. They reported on February 10, 1795, that they were fully satisfied that the Museum document was the original Protestation, and not a copy. The report was signed by Charles Butler, William Cruise, Henry Clifford and William Throckmorton. By order of the Club, it was printed and circulated. This elicited a pamphlet from Milner, entitled *A Reply to the Report Published by the*

[1] The Secretary of the British Museum.
[2] *Westminster Archives.*

Cisalpine Club on the Authenticity of the Protestation at the Museum, in which the Spuriousness of that Deed is Detected. It was dated March 26, 1795. The Cisalpine lawyers rejoined with a further Report on May 12, which too was printed. Milner wished to answer again, but was dissuaded by Bishop Douglass, and it was left to Rev. Charles Plowden to say the last word, which he did in a pamphlet dated November 10, 1795, and entitled *A Letter from Rev. Charles Plowden to C. Butler, W. Cruise, H. Clifford and W. Throckmorton, Esqrs., and Reporters of the Cisalpine Club, in which their reports on the authenticity of the Instrument of Catholic Protestation Lodged in the British Museum are Examined.*

We shall now proceed to a short summary of the chief arguments used in the controversy.

A few words of preliminary explanation must first be given. The original Protestation was engrossed on parchment, and rolled up on a wooden roller. The signatures were taken on similar skins of parchment, which were afterwards sewn on to the instrument itself. In the case of the London meetings the original Protestation was produced by those who collected the signatures; but in the provinces it was for obvious reasons more convenient to send a printed copy to accompany the parchment sheets on which the signatures were to be written. The Protestation was subsequently re-printed several times: once as an Appendix to Lord Petre's pamphlet against Dr. Horsley; once in the *Third Blue Book;* twice on "elephant" paper for the use of Members of Parliament; and many years later, in Charles Butler's *Memoirs of English Catholics.* There were many small differences, chiefly typographical, between the various editions: roughly, there may be said to have been two chief versions. One was that printed and circulated for signature, with which the Appendix in Lord Petre's pamphlet agrees: this is punctuated by Roman numerals, I., II., III., etc. The others all agree fairly well together, and are punctuated with Arabic numerals, 1st, 2nd, 3rd, etc.

Milner's explanation of these facts was as follows. He considered that as Lord Petre had received the Protestation in the first instance direct from Lord Stanhope, the version in his own pamphlet was likely to have been copied from it, and consequently to be the same identically as the document

originally engrossed, which also would have been taken from Lord Stanhope's draft. He corroborated this by the fact that the first printed edition, circulated for signature in 1789, also agreed with it exactly. He surmised that the other version was Charles Butler's copy, carelessly made, which he used in the *Blue Book* and elsewhere. Now six months had passed away between the meeting at which the vote was passed that the Protestation should be deposited at the Museum, and the date of its actual deposit. Milner contended that during the interval the original document had been lost or destroyed; that Butler had supplied its place with a new copy, taken from his own; and that this was the one deposited in the Museum.

The alternative explanation is at least as simple. It is equally possible that the version with Arabic numerals may have been that originally engrossed, and when copied out in order to produce printed documents for signature, this may have been carelessly done by Charles Butler, and the Roman numerals and other slight variations may have crept in during the process. Then Lord Petre would most naturally have sent one of that edition to press with his pamphlet, while Charles Butler would have used the original in compiling the *Blue Book*, for it was in his possession at the time.

Milner had of course other arguments, of an extrinsic nature. There were old needle holes, showing that the deed had been taken to pieces and re-sewn; the sheets on which the Protestation was written were different from and fresher looking than those which contained the signatures; new signatures had been added at a later date, including that of Alexander Geddes, which comes last, and was omitted in all the printed lists; and an extra sheet had been inserted giving in a few words an account by Charles Butler of the history of the Protestation.[1] This showed that unwarrantable liberties had been taken with the Instrument. Milner also contended that the whole document had been carelessly kept, as the sheets of signatures had admittedly been sent to the printer's, and while they were there, they could not, he maintained, be considered as in Mr. Butler's custody.

Most of these arguments are susceptible of answers. The

[1] See *Hist. Mem.*, iv., p. 53.

very fact of the Instrument having been in the hands of the printers accounted for its having been taken to pieces, and consequently for the old needle holes. It may indeed be questioned whether Mr. Butler ought to have allowed the document to go out of his possession, and whether it would not have been more proper to have taken a manuscript copy to send to press. Likewise, many would be of opinion that he had no right to allow the addition of fresh signatures while it was in his custody. Still more, it might be urged that the Committee had no right when they printed the Instrument in the *Third Blue Book*, to prefix the title of "The Declaration and Protestation signed by the English Catholic Dissenters in 1789,"[1] which many of those who had signed it would have greatly objected to. But these are questions quite separate from that of the authenticity of the Museum document. And when all has been said, it is difficult to get away from the solemn assertion made by Mr. Butler and Mr. Hope, his head clerk, that the original had been always in their custody, and was the same as that which can be seen to this day in the British Museum.[2] Mr. Morton, the Secretary of the Museum, evidently attached no credence to the contention that it was spurious, and a few years later Milner himself seems to have withdrawn the charge.[3]

During the early part of the year 1794, the status of the Cisalpine Club seems to have been exercising the minds of the Catholic body. For this many considered that the title was chiefly responsible, and Lord Petre boldly suggested that it should be changed. This proposal did not, however, find favour with the members, and, instead, they proposed to issue a statement clearly defining their position and their aims, which they thought would remove all prejudice. The following Resolutions were therefore passed on the motion of Sir Henry Englefield at a meeting on March 11, 1794:—

"First, that the institution of the *Cisalpine Club* arose from the conviction as well of those Gentlemen who were the

[1] The original Protestation had no title: it merely began "We whose names are hereunto subscribed, Catholics of England, do freely," etc.

[2] See also Charles Butler's letter to Bishop Douglass, p. 160.

[3] *Letters to a Prebendary*, 4th ed., p. 455. In the Appendix to the *Supplementary Memoirs*, however, Milner returns to the charge, and repeats it with vehemence.

original members as of those who have since been admitted into it, that it would be highly beneficial to the interests of the English Catholics that some of them should from time to time meet in order to watch and improve any opportunities that may offer to advance their further emancipation, but that without any the most distant pretence of assuming to themselves any degree of power or authority whatever, much less with any intention of interference with spiritual concerns.

"Seconded by Lord Petre.

"Secondly, that the fundamental principle of this Club has ever been firm and entire adherence to the Protestation which they in the year 1789 did in common with the rest of English Catholics sign and present to the Legislature as a pledge and test of their loyalty to their King and the established Constitution of their Country, an Instrument which they consider as the bond of reconciliation between them and their Protestant fellow-subjects; and under Providence, the basis of that relief they lately received, and to which they are happy thus again to declare their full and determined adherence.

"Seconded by Dr. Bellasyse.

"Thirdly, that this Club did assume the name of Cisalpine as a mark of their opposition to those usurpations of the Court of Rome on the Civil Authority, against which their Catholic Ancestors had been obliged repeatedly to guard; and of their abhorrence of the doctrine of the Deposing and Dispensing powers of the Pope, as stated and disclaimed in the Protestation, doctrines which have for above a century been distinguished by the names of Ultramontane and Transalpine.

"Seconded by Sir John Throckmorton."

This circular did not succeed in allaying the feeling against the Cisalpine Club. As a practical way of combating its influence, a rival association was formed, on a broader basis, under the name of the "Roman Catholic Meeting," which it was hoped might eventually absorb the Cisalpine Club. The new association was meant to be as comprehensive as possible, so as not to limit its membership to any particular section or class of Catholics. The annual subscription was a guinea, and any one who paid this was welcome to attend the meetings. The first of these was held at the Crown and Anchor, in the

Strand, on May 1, 1794, and is thus described by Bishop Douglass, in a letter to Bishop Walmesley:—[1]

"My Lord,

"The meeting yesterday was very respectable. Lord Stourton was called to the chair. Present, Earl of Newburgh, Lords Arundell and Clifford; Baronets, Sir William Jerningham, Sir Walter Blount, Sir Carnaby Haggerston, Sir —— Bellew, Sir Thomas Fleetwood; Gentlemen, Messrs. Constable, Arundel, Weld and son, Stonor, Eyre, Weston, Clifford of Tixall, in all 49 or 50. The object of the meeting was to form a general society of Catholic Noblemen and Gentlemen, who should meet together from time to time, in order to promote a union of the Catholic families, and to preserve unanimity of opinion among them, and in reality to counteract any obnoxious attempts of the Cisalpines, and to prevent the Cisalpines being looked upon as the body which was to act for the Catholics of England. The Chairman after dinner read the outlines, or if you please, rules of this Society. It is to be a Society of Catholic Noblemen and Gentlemen open to all Gentlemen being Catholics. The VV. AA. are members of it. Every N[obleman] and G[entleman] has a right to introduce a clergyman as a friend, on giving notice to the secretary the day before the meeting of his intention, and paying for his dinner. There are to be held two meetings every year, *viz.*, the first Thursday after the 18th of January, and the first Thursday in the month of May.

"After these outlines were read, Mr. F. Plowden rose, and in a speech of some length combated the idea of forming another Society, as there was one already established, *viz.*, the Cisalpine, on principles in which we all agreed; that much evil, perhaps a spiritual schism, might be the consequence. He also mentioned the tenets of his two brothers as given in their last publications, reprobated these tenets, &c., &c. He was not seconded. After a short pause, Sir C. Haggerston rose and spoke for the union of all Catholics, declared that there was not an iota in what had been read by the Chairman which reflected on any one person's conduct; that no one Gentleman being a Catholic was excluded; that the Gentle-

[1] *Clifton Archives*, vol. vii.

men of the Cisalpine Club had been invited as well as others; of that Club he had the pleasure of seeing some members present; others had declined the invitation. He hoped that this Society would be formed, and those who now declined uniting with it would, he hoped, come in, &c., &c., &c.

"The Cisalpines feel very sore and look upon the meeting as held in opposition to them: therefore all refused the invitation except Sir William Jerningham, Sir W. Blount and Dr. Nihill. . . .

"The society was formed. All present, three Gentlemen excepted, signed their names, and gave their guinea in advance, as every member is to subscribe a guinea annually to defray the expense of the two dinners, and also any other expense that may be incurred. . . .

"I remain, with every good wish, My Lord,

"Your obedt. h'ble servant,

"J. DOUGLASS.

"May 2, '94."

A careful analysis of the list of original members of the "Roman Catholic Meeting" bears out the hopeful tone of Dr. Douglass's letter. Two of the three Mediators were among them, and the fact that the list included such names as Lord Stourton and Mr. Thomas Clifford of Tixall who had been among the extreme party on the one side, and Mr. Weld and Lord Arundell who had been their prominent opponents on the other, augured well for the prospect of re-uniting the Catholic body. We are not surprised to find Bishop Douglass writing several times that the dissolution of the Cisalpine Club was imminent, and that its members would join the new Association.

For some reason which it is difficult to ascertain, however, the "Roman Catholic Meeting" failed to realise its early promise. Milner writes: "The greatest hopes of the general benefit to the Catholic religion and the Catholic cause were conceived from the continuance of this Society; but owing to some mismanagement or jealousy which the writer has not fully discovered, it fell to pieces in the course of a very few

years".[1] No allusion to the Association is to be found in any of the letters now extant, after the meeting above described, and no further light can be thrown on the matter.

The reputation of the Cisalpine Club, however, did not improve, and in the month of February, 1795, the Rev. Joseph Wilkes, by order of his Provincial, resigned his membership. Since his return from the Continent, Mr. Wilkes had accepted a chaplaincy at Heythrop, in Oxfordshire, belonging to the Earl of Shrewsbury. Being now in the Midland District, he became subject to Bishop Thomas Talbot, which fact overcame the difficulty as to his suspension. With his own Order Mr. Wilkes was in high favour. At the Chapter in 1794 he was appointed titular "Cathedral Prior of Durham," and by a majority of 14 votes to 8 was even elected Vice-President of the English Congregation.[2] The following letter, dated from the town house of the Earl of Shrewsbury, explains itself:—

"STANHOPE STREET, *Feb.* 10, 1795.

"SIR,

"Offence has been taken by some persons at the name of Cisalpine Club, and by the requisition of my Provincial Superior, I apply to you to have my name withdrawn from the list of members. I am persuaded the Gentlemen who compose that club will see this mark of deference and love of peace on my part without disapprobation. I desire you, Sir, will be obliging enough to assure all the members of my real esteem and sincere attachment, and am

"Your obedt. humble servant,

"JOSEPH WILKES.

"HENRY CLIFFORD ESQ."

The moral effect of the withdrawal of one who had held such a prominent position in the contests of the past was necessarily considerable, and caused the members of the club

[1] *Sup. Mem.*, p. 101.

[2] The official title was "Praeses secundo electus". It carried no duties except in the event of the death of the President General, in which case he would succeed to that office until the next General Chapter. These were held every four years. It should be borne in mind that the Chapter of 1794 was an incomplete one, several of the most prominent members of St. Gregory's, Douay, and St. Edmund's, Paris, being at that time in prison in France.

again to reconsider their position. The following resolutions were passed in answer to the letter of Mr. Wilkes:—

"1°. That this Club feels the highest respect for the character of Mr. Wilkes and the most sincere gratitude for the services rendered by him to the body of English Catholics, and truly regrets that any circumstances should engage him to withdraw from their Society.

"2°. That the letter of Mr. Wilkes and this resolution be inserted in the books of the Society.

"3°. That the Treasurer do transmit to Mr. Wilkes a copy of the two foregoing resolutions."

After this Lord Petre again proposed that in order to avoid giving further offence, the name of the club should be changed, the alternative suggested being the "Friends of the Protestation". His proposal, however, did not meet with approval, and after one or two amendments, proposed at successive meetings, the change of name was definitely negatived by a unanimous vote on the motion of Sir Henry Englefield, at a meeting on May 12, 1795. The club therefore continued under its original name, and lasted for nearly forty years. Milner indeed says that "while the Cisalpine Republic existed,[1] the Club suppressed its title," but the Minute Book does not show this, the record of meetings continuing throughout without break.

After the first few years, however, the Cisalpine Club took very little active part in Catholic affairs, and it gradually became a mere dining club, the minutes recording little beyond the price of the dinner and the amount of wine consumed. Writing in 1815, long after the club had ceased to be an active organisation, Dr. Poynter sums up his opinion about it in the following words:—

"On the title (the Cisalpine Club) this may be said—that in its origin, in its beginning, it was offensive; but that now, from the lapse of time, it has become a name without the meaning originally signified by it, as we often see happen on other occasions. This Society is now nothing more than a convivial meeting of Catholics, at which they meet on terms of friendship and keep up a friendly intercourse. For many

[1] *I.e.* from 1797 to 1802.

years nothing has been transacted or discussed in it upon religion or any serious concerns. I certainly could wish to remove that offensive title: but as it is now an empty name, of the meaning and origin of which most are ignorant, as the attempt itself to remove it might stir up in one or two a spirit which we hope is extinct and excite discussions unnecessary and always dangerous, regard both to religion and to peace leads me not to meddle with this title, at least for the present." [1]

It is due to the reputation of the members who formed the Cisalpine Club, who were for the most part staunch Catholics and most devout in private life, to add that there is not a word in the Minute Book, from first to last, which indicates the slightest disrespect for authority, or any tendency to unsound doctrine or practice. The vicars apostolic are mentioned incidentally, always with due respect to their office, and the whole book is Catholic in tone. When a meeting falls on a day of fasting or abstinence, it is postponed and the reason is given. The works recorded are those in which Catholic interests were bound up, and they are treated from a Catholic point of view. The whole character of the club and its transactions as judged from the Minute Book conveys a wholly favourable impression.

Father Amherst's testimony may also be quoted. He speaks indeed not of the original members of the club, but of their successors who, however, presumably inherited their spirit and traditions, so far as these could be separated from the actual controversies of the day, his own father being one of them. Writing in 1886, he says: "Catholics who have celebrated their jubilee in life can well remember all the later members of the Cisalpine Club. And it would not be too much to say that in remembering them they call to mind men who were remarkable for their respect for Church authority, and who carefully instilled that respect into the hearts and minds of their sons." [2]

[1] *Apologetical Epistle*, quoted by Butler, iv., p. 502.
[2] *Hist. of Cath. Emanc.*, i., p. 196.

CHAPTER XXIII.

DISSOLUTION OF THE ENGLISH COLLEGES AND CONVENTS ON THE CONTINENT.

1793-1795.

THE influence of the Revolution on English Catholic affairs extended far beyond the case of the Refugee Clergy. A further and more far-reaching result affected their own persons and property, for the majority of the numerous British establishments on the Continent were broken up; the inmates in many cases imprisoned; and although few of them lost their lives, nearly all had to undergo very great hardships, sometimes of long duration; they lost all their property; and thought themselves fortunate to get back to England alive. Most of them reached London in the summer of the two successive years, 1794 and 1795, and the problem of how to receive them and give them support became pressing and urgent.

Nevertheless that which seemed at the time so great a calamity to the Church in England, in the end turned out to be a blessing; for it is doubtful whether anything short of absolute necessity would have supplied the requisite stimulus to induce the religious to break up their foreign establishments, and face the difficult task of refounding them in England. Not only had they become devotedly attached to the very walls of their foreign homes, where they and their spiritual ancestors before them had lived a religious life, but through long habit they had acquired the practical conviction that the necessary peace and security for following such a vocation could only be obtained on the Continent, in a Catholic country. Even in the case of the colleges, the superiors had grown so accustomed to their being at a distance, that they had come to believe that their far-off situation was a positive advantage for them, as it freed the students from the distractions to which they would

have been liable nearer home. Moreover, there was a special proviso in the Act of 1791 forbidding the foundation of colleges or convents in England, and in the event of a popular outcry, this clause might easily have been put in force, so that at best, a return to England would have brought with it new anxieties and apprehensions. Nothing short of an immediate and pressing urgency would have induced them to face these dangers.

Fortunately, however, the progress of the Revolution allowed no choice in the matter, and in the event, greatly in consequence of this, the suffering communities were received in England with every mark of popular sympathy. No objection was raised to their permanently settling in this country, and the establishment of colleges and religious houses in their midst, gave renewed life and vigour to the Catholics of England.

In the present chapter we propose to give a short sketch of the story of the sufferings which these communities went through, and the expulsion of nearly all of them from their homes, leaving to a subsequent chapter the description of their reception in England.

Douay and St. Omer.

It had already become evident that the establishments in France itself could not long survive. From the time when the law for the Civil Constitution of the Clergy was passed, it had become a schismatical country, and although many hoped and believed that the schism would not prove permanent, for the time it created a difficulty. Writing to Dr. Douglass from Rome on July 13, 1791—just a year after the law had passed—the Rev. Robert Smelt speaks in this sense: "I take the liberty of troubling you with this letter," he writes, "by order of Cardinal Antonelli, who a few days ago desired me to write to you and to Messrs. Talbot and Gibson on the following subject. The present situation of ecclesiastical affairs in France is such as to render it highly improper for our College to continue at Douay much longer. His Eminence has been informed of the steps taken by Mr. Stapleton and others to obtain exemption for foreign establishments from the Bishops' jurisdiction, but this will be to no purpose. The new Bishops

consider themselves entitled to the same authority as their Predecessors enjoyed, but being intruders, and in consequence considered as schismatics, we cannot acknowledge or communicate with them. You are therefore requested to consider of a plan to be carried into execution in case it should be necessary to remove the College elsewhere. The Cardinal wishes to know if an establishment could not be formed in England as has recently been done in Ireland.[1] The Irish in France are mostly dispersed; we have seen some here endeavouring to find means to complete their studies, but as yet cannot succeed. The pension to Douay is hitherto regularly paid, but I doubt much of its being continued in case the College remains in a schismatical country."

In this letter Mr. Smelt indicated perhaps more than he was aware of. The authorities in Rome evidently at this time looked upon the vicars apostolic of England as indirectly responsible for the conduct of the English College at Douay, and directly so for providing any establishment that was to replace it. This was a change of later years. Douay had existed long before there were any vicars apostolic in England: it was a Pontifical college, the superiors were free from all control save that of the Holy See, and the president was independent of any English bishop. This had always been acknowledged and acted upon. The change indicated in the above letter must be considered as part of the gradual development of the position of the vicars apostolic towards the normal state of bishops in ordinary. They had already indeed been accorded a consultative voice in the election of a president of Douay; when the office fell vacant they had sent up a *terna* of suggested candidates to fill it. The position shadowed in this letter, however, like that of the bishops in regard to the Irish College at Maynooth, was one of much closer connection with the government of the college. In the event, it was this fact which made the essential difference between the college at Douay and those founded in England to replace it; that whereas the former was a Pontifical college, the latter, whether governed by one bishop or by several, have always been episcopal establishments.

We can take up the history of Douay from the time when

[1] Carlow College, which was already nearly completed in 1787, though not eventually opened until 1793. See Bishop Healy's *History of Maynooth*, p. 98.

Dr. Gibson left to become Bishop of the Northern District. Some considerable period elapsed before his successor was appointed. The three names recommended by the vicars apostolic were Rev. Thomas Eyre, who was afterwards president of Crook Hall and Ushaw; Rev. Edward Kitchen; and Rev. John Daniel, the actual vice-president, a great-nephew of Rev. Hugh Tootell, better known as "Dodd" the historian —all three Northern men. After a good deal of correspondence, the Rev. Edward Kitchen was appointed, and he arrived at Douay on July 30, 1791. The appointment turned out an unfortunate one, for the post was evidently beyond Mr. Kitchen's strength. After two months of office, he resigned in failing health, and a few months later he died. The events happening in France made it important that there should not be another interregnum, so without asking for any fresh *terna*, Rome forthwith appointed Rev. John Daniel president. Again the appointment was not all that could have been wished. In a time of peace, Mr. Daniel might have filled the office well enough: he had lived his whole life at Douay, and was familiar with the routine of college work; but he was not the man to deal with a sudden and difficult crisis, when strong and prompt action might be necessary. This was felt even by his friends. In his account of the last days of Douay, written many years afterwards, Rev. John Penswick, who had been a boy there at the time, wrote regretting the "deficiency of energetic resolve in our very worthy President, who having passed nearly the whole of his long life within the precincts of the College, from which he never had been absent for a whole continuous month —nor perhaps for a week—could not bear the idea of a separation from it. Great allowances," he adds, "must be made for his indecision in consideration of his strong attachments. Could he have surmised that the College had been lost through his own want of perseverance, that imagination, slender and groundless though it might be, would have been fatal to his peace, and perhaps to his life." [1]

Among the "Seniors," as the chief superiors were called, were several well known in Catholic affairs later on. Chief among these was Dr. Poynter, the prefect of studies, of whom the highest opinions were entertained. We shall meet his

[1] *Haydock Papers*, p. 115.

name frequently in the following pages: let it suffice here to say that he was a model of piety and regularity, and a man of very considerable ability and strength of character. His conduct during the imprisonment is described as one of the great sources of edification during that trying time. Every day, regardless of consequences, he would recite his Breviary in a public place, in sight of all, an act which required no little courage and initiative.

The vice-president, Rev. Joseph Hodgson, who was a native of London, was likewise a man of great holiness of life, though of a less strong character. He was afterwards well known for many years at St. George's Fields, and held the office of vicar-general to Bishop Douglass. The General Prefect was Rev. Thomas Stout, who came from the North. The Procurator, Rev. Joseph Beaumont, was the only representative of the Western District. Among the "Seniors" who held no office were Rev. Thomas Smith, afterwards Vicar Apostolic of the Northern District, and Rev. William Wilds, well known for over half a century as priest at Warwick Street Chapel, London, and an interesting connecting link with modern times, for he lived to see the establishment of the hierarchy under Cardinal Wiseman.

The first sign of a menacing nature showed itself at Douay towards the end of the year 1791. The following extract from a letter written by Bishop Douglass on January 16, 1792, gives an idea of what occurred:—[1]

"On the 14th of last month," he writes to Rev. Thomas Southworth, "the Administrators of the District of Douay summoned two Gentlemen of each British house of Douay to appear before them, to answer an accusation which certain citizens of Douay had brought against them, *viz.* that some of their houses were haunts of counter-revolutionists.

"Two from each house accordingly appeared before them the next day, and the President of the District of Douay (the cy-devant Marquis d'Aoust) read a speech to them which appears to me reproachful and saucy. It was afterwards printed, and sent to each house of British subjects. Our Gentlemen after a few days returned an answer in writing full of spirit, and excellently drawn up in point of style and sentiment, and

[1] *Westminster Archives.* See also Appendix H.

I hope not deficient in prudence (yet it may be thought that they have gone further than they need to have done when they declare boldly that Rome has a right of jurisdiction over all particular churches, &c., &c.), but they on the spot know what circumstances call for better than we at a distance.

"Our Gentlemen's answer offended the *Directoire du District* most grievously: they set the people of the town on talking against our houses, and they have sent our Gentlemen's answer to the National Assembly to have sentence passed on it. Our Gentlemen alarmed at this measure, sent in a second answer, declaring that they did not mean to give offence, &c., &c. They also have sent up their statement of Facts and their defence to the Assembly, and have called on the English ambassador to defend them."

We gather from Dr. Poynter's Memorial, written twenty-five years later, that the directory of the district ultimately sent a civil answer to each of the five houses in Douay, and it appeared for a time as though the danger would pass away. Dr. Douglass wrote expressing confident hopes in that sense. Two measures of precaution were taken. One was to conform to the general decree already issued forbidding the wearing of ecclesiastical costume outside the church, so that the priests and students alike discarded their cassocks. The other was to burn all books and pamphlets which in case of a search might be considered by the French in any way "aristocratical".

For a time affairs went on quietly; but even though Douay as a town suffered less than most, events were happening which could not but cause apprehension as to what the future might bring. In the seclusion of their own house, the English collegians would have heard of the decree for the banishment of the clergy in August, 1792, and they would have seen those of them in their own town who remained faithful, having to leave, and their places being supplied by the "intruded" priests. The news of the September massacres in Paris and the provinces must have reached them, and there were not wanting signs that Douay might soon follow the lead of other towns in France, and become the scene of bloodshed and cruelty. These early indications are alluded to in an account which they jointly

composed a year or two later[1] by Lewis and Arthur Clifford, students in the school of "Syntax".[2]

"In the first enthusiasm of dawning liberty, the soldiers and citizens of Douai paraded the streets in large bodies, with boughs of trees in their hands, crying '*Vive la Nation*,' and obliging all those that met them to join their company. They came to the College in this manner, and made us dance with them in the playground, and not content with that, forced those who could not avoid their company, to parade the streets and dance in the market place with them. They frequently paid us these unwelcome visits, as the beer we gave them on these occasions proved a good inducement to them to renew them. They became so troublesome that we were often obliged to leave the College early in the morning, to go to our country house, and not return till evening."

It was now becoming a question whether the professors and students would not be well advised to abandon the college and seek their personal safety while they yet had the power. Some such course had already been adopted by the other British communities in Douay. The Irish and Scotch students had returned home some time since, leaving the respective presidents—Mr. Dillon and Mr. Farquarson—in charge of the buildings. The English Benedictines had likewise sent their pupils away, though the prior and monks remained. The question was whether the English collegians should follow the same example. The number of students was steadily declining, for a good many were recalled by their parents, and no new students arrived to replace them. On October 1, 1790, when the official list for the scholastic year was read out, there were 140 students and professors. The following year the number had gone down to 126; and by 1792 it had further decreased to 103: and the decrease continued rapidly during the next few months. Among those who left at that time were two whose names were well known in after life—John Lingard and Daniel O'Connell, the latter of whom had only

[1] *St. Edmund's College Archives.*

[2] The school forms at Douay were named in accordance with the French custom, Rhetoric, Poetry, Syntax, Grammar and Rudiments I., II. and III "Syntax" would correspond more or less to the Fifth Form at an English Public School.

been at Douay a few months. The question was now whether it would be well to send the whole number back to England without delay.

The authorities decided in the negative. Whether the decision was wise or not, in the light of after events, may be questioned: but the disinterestedness of the motives for arriving at it was manifest. In the words of one of them, they considered that "the College must be saved at all hazards". They looked on its existence as essential for the English mission, and all personal considerations gave way before the one great idea of saving the college. While allowing those who so wished to leave, the president and professors determined to stay, together with such students as were willing to share the dangers and responsibilities with them.

In the early part of the year 1793 two events happened which changed the situation of the Douay collegians for the worse. These were the execution of King Louis XVI. on January 21, followed by the declaration of war between France and England a few days later. As a sequel to this, the sequestration of English property in France followed. On February 18, the Republican seals were put on all the doors and chests containing anything of value in all the five British houses, and the inmates were declared prisoners. They were not, however, molested, and at the English College the ordinary daily life continued without interruption throughout the spring and early summer. It was not until the month of August, when the defeat of Dumouriez brought the Austrian army within a few miles of Douay, so that the cannonading was heard at the college, that further signs of trouble showed themselves. In apprehension of a siege, the order was given that all the British should leave the town within twenty-four hours. The English collegians retired to their house at Esquerchin, which they reached in safety. Mr. Farquarson, the president of the Scots' College, succeeded in escaping out of the country: and apparently Mr. Dillon, the head of the Irish College, was equally successful. The inmates of the other establishments were less fortunate. The following extract from a letter from Rev. P. Collingridge, O.S.F., to Bishop Sharrock, whose brother was prior of the Benedictines, furnishes interest-

ing details as to the Benedictines and Franciscans. It is dated September 5, 1793.[1]

"I suppose your Lordship is already informed of the expulsion of the English from Douay; but perhaps some particulars which I have collected from our Guardian who is just returned to the Continent, may not have reached you. Banished as they were into the villages without any prospect of subsistence, and refused passports for Flanders, they determined to make their escape by night to the Austrian posts. Your body ventured first, and about Mont Couvet, on the Lille pavement, were surprised by a party of French, who fired amongst them, but luckily wounded nobody. On this alarm many made off, and were fortunate enough to reach Esquerchin. Your brother and chief part of the community are of this number. Twelve others were taken prisoners, conducted to Douay, and shut up in the Annuntiates, and undergoing the interrogatory when Mr. Hawley[2] left the country. F. Peter, the only priest, some lay brothers and young ones, scholars chiefly, I believe, are of this number. This disaster happened on the Friday. Our people apprized of it, resolved on staying on in the village of Niverelles, whither they had retired, rather than expose themselves to a similar misfortune; but on the Sunday they received orders from the commandant of a French camp in the neighbourhood to evacuate the chateau, on which the Guardian with 7 or 8 others resolved to attempt an escape, and were happy to effect it, after a variety of adventures, and once for the space of two hours hiding themselves in a bean field from a troop of horse who had perceived them, and searched round about for them till they were tired. Eight Collegians endeavoured to escape; five were taken prisoners, the other three have not been heard of.

"Our community, the major part at least, are assembled at Bruges. Mr. Pilling has returned with the Guardian, and by consent of Mr. Ferrers &c. is going to conduct them to the Carmes at Tongres. This is the substance of all the intelligence brought by Mr. Hawley. I am under great

[1] *Clifton Archives*, vol. v.
[2] Rev. L. Hawley, O.S.F., the "Guardian".

anxiety for your worthy brother and Community. May God protect them!"

The subsequent adventures of the Benedictines appear from the following two letters. Bishop Sharrock writes on October 22:—

"Mr. Pilling brings news from abroad that my brother, D. Anselm Lorymer, and about half of our people of Douay are yet permitted to dwell at our little place about three miles from the town. Those who were taken in their attempt to escape are in prison. They are twelve or thirteen." The Rev. John Warmoll completes the story on October 25: "From Mr. Bennet's account I find that Mr. Kendal, with ten others who were under arrest at St. Gregory's, have made their escape to Tournay, and that there were great hopes that your Brother and such others who were brother prisoners at Esquerchin would join them in a few days".

Whatever hopes the last six Benedictines had of escaping were suddenly frustrated on Saturday, October 12, when they received orders to return to Douay; and on reaching the town, saw a decree placarded on the walls, ordering the arrest of all British subjects. They were taken to the Scots' College, where they found Mr. Daniel and his community assembled. Four days later, all were sent away as prisoners to Doullens in Picardy. There were some fifty collegians, besides the six Benedictine monks; their *cortège* consisted of a coach for President Daniel, and eight waggons for the others. After spending the first night at Arras, the following evening they arrived at their destination, and were confined in a large fortress known as the citadel. One priest, Rev. W. H. Coombes (nephew of Dr. Coombes of Meadgate, near Bath), had succeeded in escaping on the road.[1] During the first three months of the imprisonment, a considerable number of the boys and several "Divines" also got away; but the professors and seniors made no attempt to escape. The number of the prisoners was finally reduced to thirty-two, including the six Benedictines. They were known as the "Trente-deux"; their

[1] He afterwards wrote an account of his adventures, which appeared in the *Catholic Directory* for the year 1800. It was reprinted in the *History of St. Edmund's College*, Appendix B.

names were frequently called over; and no further escapes were possible.

The story of the imprisonment at Doullens has often been told, and it will not be necessary to add very much to the account. Notwithstanding the hardships that the collegians had to endure, they kept up their spirits throughout, and even attempted to continue their routine of study—for they had managed to bring a few books with them from Douay. In order to relieve the monotony, they used to sing choruses for hours at a time, and there was real danger that this continual effervescence of spirits, added to the distinctly national character of their songs, might bring them into trouble. When the weather was fine they were always out in the citadel playing "Prisoner's Base," or other such games. Their French fellow-prisoners were fairly puzzled at their conduct, and would warn them that they did not understand the seriousness of their position.

The ordinary life of the collegians, after they had settled down, can be given from the account by Lewis and Arthur Clifford from which we have already quoted, and which gives a vivid picture of the hardships with which they were surrounded.

"On Monday, November 4, 1793, the Commander came and told us we might go down to the two rooms below which we used to dine in. These were not quite so large as the garret. He gave the monks who were with us a small room above stairs, and thus made it rather more comfortable. We now sewed up our straw in a blanket, each of us having two, and made a palliasse of them. The floor was so covered at night that one could hardly set a foot between any of them. In the daytime we put them one on another round the room, and made seats of them. We soon got some tables and benches, and cooked for ourselves, so that now we used to get up regularly at six, then had about three quarters of an hour's prayer, then we arranged our palliasses, then breakfasted and did what we pleased till ten. At these interstices of leisure, we used to mend our clothes and wash our stockings and handkerchiefs—washing was so dear, and money so scarce that we only put out shirts and sheets. Then we studied an hour and a half; dined at twelve; then as we pleased till three, when we studied again an hour and a half. At six half an hour's

prayers, and then to supper. At half-past eight we made our beds; then had night prayers; and then to bed. This was our way of life till we left Doullens. There being a small closet near our room, which we also occupied, we contrived every Sunday by fastening blankets up at the window the night before, to have mass in it, having brought materials."[1]

In the month of May, 1794, the monotony of the imprisonment was relieved by the sudden arrival, late one night, of Rev. Gregory Stapleton, and the collegians of St. Omer, numbering fifty-two. They had undergone longer imprisonment, and even greater hardships than those at Doullens. At St. Omer itself they had been imprisoned from August 1 till the following January. They were then removed to Arras, where it was known that the fury of the Revolution raged more fiercely than almost anywhere outside Paris. There it was that they suffered most; more than once they were in imminent danger of being guillotined; and they described their removal to Doullens as a positive relief. Many of them, like Dr. Stapleton himself, were old Douay men, and the meeting with their former friends was an unexpected pleasure on both sides. Thenceforth they all followed the same rule of life in the citadel, and were allowed to mix freely together.

A few weeks after this, the anxieties of the collegians increased, for sickness set in among them, and one of the St. Omer priests, Rev. Richard Brettargh, died, on July 24, 1794. After the fall of Robespierre, only four days later, however, there was immediate relief. They were given wider bounds, and with increased facilities for exercise, their health improved. A few weeks later the collegians were allowed to return to St. Omer and Douay respectively, where although still considered theoretically as prisoners, they were allowed to go out almost at their pleasure, on their pledging their words that they would not use this privilege in order to make their escape.

Paris.

Leaving the prisoners at Douay and St. Omer for a time, we naturally turn our attention next to other places in France

[1] The materials for Mass were brought by the Benedictine monks, and the chalice used on these occasions is still preserved at Downside. The account here of the celebration of Mass differs somewhat from that usually given: possibly the method adopted varied somewhat from week to week.

where there were English communities, first and foremost to Paris itself, the centre of the revolutionary horrors. Of the several English communities in the capital, the Benedictine nuns suffered the greatest hardships. Their troubles began on October 3, 1793, when they were all declared prisoners in their own convent. They were not, however, allowed to continue their religious life there, but the house was turned into a common jail: many other prisoners were put together with the nuns, and all alike were treated with harshness and even cruelty. Only with the greatest difficulty, and by paying heavy prices, could they obtain supplies of food or fuel, and then in very insufficient quantities. To add to their anxieties, from time to time a party would be taken off to the guillotine, the executions in Paris averaging from sixty to a hundred per day; and the nuns were kept in a continual state of alarm lest their own turn might be coming.

This state of things continued through the winter and spring till the month of July, 1794, when the nuns were suddenly removed to the Tower of Vincennes, where they were kept closely guarded for four months. During this period the prioress fell dangerously ill, and as she was unable to obtain any kind of nursing or medicine, her life was despaired of. Happily, however, her constitution proved strong enough to survive these evils, and when the order came for the nuns to return to Paris, she was able to accompany them. They were now put in the convent of the English Austin nuns, in the Fossé St. Victor. These religious had also been prisoners for over a year, and the community of the "Blue Nuns" were with them; but they had been more leniently treated than the Benedictines, and now they offered the new-comers a cordial welcome. There was not even then much ease in the house; many common prisoners were crowded there, as had been the case at the Benedictine convent; but since the death of Robespierre, the hardships had been considerably relaxed, and the "Black Nuns" found their new state a great improvement on the Tower of Vincennes.

Very little news had reached England all this time concerning the community of St. Edmund, and great anxiety was felt as to their state. At length a letter from Rev. H. Parker, the

prior, reached Mr. Cowley, under date January 14, 1795, which we can give in full.[1]

"DEAR SIR,

"I have long wished to be able to have a line conveyed to you: it would be satisfactory beyond my expectation to have a line from you. We have now been about two months at liberty, after fourteen months' detention, of which the two last were at the Luxembourg, so that we have not been able to re-enter our house, nor as yet to obtain the books and goods we left in our rooms. They are now under the seals, but we are not without hopes of getting them. We are five remaining, and we live scattered up and down, *en attendant.* Mr. Naylor[2] is deceased since his release from confinement which he had undergone in good health. Cawser[3] is also dead: he died at Bicetre, having quite lost his head for about three months before his decease. Beswick[4] died about a year ago, of a fever, two or three days after we were confined. We were in our own house about twelve months, where many others were joined to us. . . . The three houses of the English Dames at Paris are united at the Fossé St. Victor: one may get to see them a little now and then. . . . It is as yet impossible for us to tell what we have to expect, and how long we may remain in our present unhappy situation. The winter is excessively severe: no wood, and everything dear in an extraordinary degree, owing to the loss of our paper money rather than to real scarcity. I can say no more until I have greater liberty and security in writing. Our finances are very narrow, on account of the loss of our paper pensions, which we expect to receive soon. If they would let us quit this country, it is what we all much desire. Be assured of my regard and friendship.

"HENRY PARKER."

OTHER HOUSES IN FRANCE.

The various communities in the provinces fared no better than those in Paris. At Aire in Artois, the community was

[1] *Clifton Archives*, vol. viii.
[2] Rev. John Placid Naylor, chaplain to the Benedictine nuns.
[3] Rev. Benedict Cawser. Bicetre was a well-known asylum outside Paris.
[4] Rev. Francis Beswick.

broken up by force, and the nuns had to seek shelter and accommodation singly wherever they could in the town. At Gravelines the Poor Clares were forced to receive two other communities at their convent—their sisters of the same order from Dunkirk, and the Benedictines of the joint communities of Dunkirk and Pontoise,—making altogether a total of seventy-seven persons. The rigours of their confinement were such that their chaplain and two of the nuns succumbed. In the Convent of the Poor Clares at Rouen over 300 prisoners were quartered, the nuns, who numbered forty, being confined in the lofts or store-rooms, for want of other space. A few months later they were moved to another prison, where there were 700 in the same condition as themselves, and where the necessaries of life were so scarce that even water could only be procured by paying for it. As in other cases, after the fall of Robespierre, they were less harshly treated; but they were still kept prisoners until the following January, and even then were not allowed to return to their convent, but were told to disperse themselves in the town.

But the most pathetic feature in connection with the English nuns during the revolution is the well-known story of the Benedictines of Cambray. They were a community of twenty-one nuns, with an abbess, under the superiorship of the Anglo-Benedictine monks, their chaplain being the president-general himself, Rev. George Augustine Walker. In consequence of his age and infirmities, a younger monk, Rev. James Higginson, lived with him and assisted him. The imprisonment of the nuns came with absolute suddenness. Up to the evening of Sunday, October 13, 1793, they still hoped that they might be left in their convent in peace. In compliance with the orders of the town authorities, they had indeed laid in a stock of provisions sufficient for six months, so as to be independent in case of a siege, and having done this they thought that they had nothing further to fear. On October 13, however, at half-past eight at night, they were awakened—for they had all retired to rest before rising for Matins, as was their custom, at midnight—and four commissioners forced an entrance into the enclosure, and fixed the official seals on all the nuns' property, which they declared to be confiscated to the nation. Having informed the nuns that they were pris-

oners in their own convent, they took their departure at about eleven o'clock. The same night they also placed the two chaplains under arrest. Mr. Walker was just recovering from a long and painful illness, so that the hardships he was called upon to go through caused no small anxiety.

A few days after this, on October 19, without any warning, the nuns were expelled from their convent, and conveyed, together with other prisoners, four days' journey to Compiègne, which being only fifty miles from Paris, was considered a more suitable place of confinement. Owing to the suddenness of their expulsion, they had no opportunity of fitting themselves out in secular dress, and their religious habits exposed them to continual insults in the streets of the towns through which they passed on their journey. They were conveyed in two open carts, guarded by soldiers. On their arrival at Compiègne, they were conducted to the Visitation convent, which had been converted into a prison, and was to be their home for eighteen months.

At the beginning there were fifty-two prisoners, including the nuns; but their number was added to almost daily. On November 25, among those who arrived were the two chaplains of the convent—Revv. G. Walker and J. Higginson; but they were not allowed to see the nuns, though they contrived to do so surreptitiously from time to time.

The outlook was now gloomy enough, and as the winter wore on, it grew even worse. The want and privation of the last few weeks told upon the community, and sickness made its appearance. With startling suddenness, Rev. George Walker sickened and died within twenty-four hours on January 12; and he was followed the very next day by one of the older nuns. Within a month two others had been added to the death roll, and the sorrow and anxiety of the survivors became intense. It seemed as though the whole community would die out during the imprisonment. The other prisoners kept away from the nuns, fearing to contract the same disease, which was said to be a species of low fever. In order to diminish the danger, they were allowed daily walks in the garden. Fortunately, however, with the return of spring the health of the nuns improved, and no further deaths took place.

It was in the summer that the well-known incident occurred

which is always bound up with the history of the Cambray religious. A community of sixteen Carmelite nuns of St. Denis were brought to Compiègne, and lodged in a room opposite that of the English community. All of them in a body were condemned to suffer death by the guillotine. The reason given was that they were in correspondence with an *émigré* priest and bishop; but according to Milner, the real cause was that the saintly aunt of King Louis XVI. had been a member of their community. The leave-taking was most affecting. It is thus described by one of the nuns:—

"The Carmelite nuns quitted Compiègne in a most saint-like manner. We saw them embrace each other before they set off, and they took an affectionate leave of us by the motion of their hands, and by their friendly gestures. On their way to the scaffold, and on the scaffold itself (as we were told by an eye-witness of credit, Monsieur Douai), they showed a firmness and a cheerful composure which nothing but a spotless conscience and a joyful hope can inspire."[1]

The last scene is told by Charles Butler in the following words:—[2]

"The fatal cart conveyed the superior and all her claustral family to the guillotine. In the road to it, they sang in unison the litanies of the Virgin Mary. At first they were received with curses, ribaldry and the other usual abominations of a French mob. But it was not long before their serene demeanour and pious chant subdued the surrounding brutality; and the multitude attended them in respectful silence to the place of execution. The cart moved slowly—all the while the nuns continued the pious strain. When the cart reached the guillotine, each, till the instrument of death touched her, sustained it. As each died the sound became proportionally weaker: at last the superior's single note was heard, and soon was heard no more. For once the French mob was affected: in silence, and apparently with some compunctious visitations, they returned to their homes."

The martyrdom of the Carmelite nuns took place on July 16, the feast of our Lady of Mount Carmel, a fact which they

[1] *Downside Review*, Christmas, 1906, p. 274. The narrative by Ann Theresa Partington is given in full, from which the above details are taken.

[2] *Hist. Mem.*, iii., p. 330.

could not but regard as a special dispensation of Providence. Two or three days afterwards, the Mayor of Compiègne called upon the English nuns to exchange their religious dress for a secular one; on their pleading poverty, he ordered them to be given some of the old clothes which the Carmelites had left behind them. They had of course no alternative but to use these, and felt privileged in doing so. After their return to England, however, they put them on one side as most precious relics, and as such they honour them at Stanbrook in Worcestershire, the present home of the community. The Carmelite martyrs have recently been beatified, and we may well hope that the day is not far distant when these garments may be honoured as secondary relics of saints.

For some time after this the English nuns were in daily apprehension of being called upon to undergo a like fate, and such was evidently expected by the mayor. After the death of Robespierre a fortnight later, however, this eventuality became gradually less probable; but throughout the year they remained in strict confinement, and the weather becoming very severe, the sufferings the nuns went through were great. It was not until the spring of 1795 that the rigours of the confinement began to be somewhat mitigated. A little later, by the friendly assistance of the mayor of Compiègne, they obtained passports to return to England. A remittance sent to them by a circuitous route reached them in the month of April, when they set out on their homeward journey.

Religious Houses in the Netherlands.

The English communities who dwelt outside the borders of France escaped imprisonment; but when the French army invaded the Netherlands they went through many very unpleasant experiences, and the constant terrors they endured told on their health and spirits, until eventually they all had to quit their convents, usually at very short notice, and had no alternative but to make their way back to England as best they could, in order to provide for their own safety.

The following extract from a letter written to Bishop Douglass by his sister, who was a Carmelite at Hoogstraat, gives a vivid picture of the trials which the communities had to go through during the last year or two of their residence

abroad, and will serve as a specimen of many others. It is dated Easter Monday, 1793.[1]

"You certainly know by the newspapers that an entire destruction of churches, convents and religion was resolved upon, the Inventories already taken of almost all the convents of both sexes, many used very ill, the silver taken away from the church's sacred vessels with the Blessed Sacrament in them, dreadful defamations in churches during the time of Holy Mass. We for several weeks before Lent were every hour expecting the dreadful shock in frights day and night. On Thursday the 14th of February (and second day of Lent) we thought the fatal hour was come, for the troops began to come in town. This was about ten o'clock in the morning. This fright continued for about three or four hours, till a friend informed us they were not the troops that suppressed, but were those that was for battle, and that they were going to attack Holland. This mollified a little our frights of suppression, for the present time. A great number of troops passed through this town all that day and night, with a number of Cannons, and a great quantity of powder &c. for to attack Holland. Four of the soldiers on Thursday morning came to our outquarters, and called for beer, bread and butter. We sent it them, and also cheese. They had their Cannon at the door. We were frightened. They stayed about two hours. One of them told our maid they were Christians, good Catholics, and only came to settle this country in peace and put all in order as it should be, and that we had nothing to fear, they would do no harm. They drank our healths and sent their compliments: then they went away, to our great joy.

"The following day, Friday, a great number more passed through and to our great increase of fright, about twelve or thirteen hundred stayed in this town till Saturday the 23rd, and from the 14th day when they first came in till the 23rd a great number of troops both day and night passed through. On the 23rd they all left this town, and went to Holland, and after that for above fourteen days we heard the Cannons from Holland. We were truly glad the French could not get the master, although we and all the town were dreadfully

[1] *Westminster Archives.*

frightened at the thought of the French returning this way. I will leave their return till I have mentioned some other things.

"The first Sunday of Lent the French planted before the town house the Tree of Liberty, with noise of drums, music and ringing of bells, and we were also ordered to ring, which shocked us much. They required all the magistrates to be present, and when planted made them dance round it.

"The 1st of March we had a most dreadful fright (for this town was never free from French soldiers, more or less, from the 14th of February to the 24th of March, Palm Sunday night). Seven soldiers came to our house between five and six in the evening, got in, went to the maids' kitchen, then rushed into the church, where our Confessor was at his prayers, and we were in our choir at hours. We, hearing such a noise of bawling and talking in the church, we was ready to faint, supposing the soldiers were come to kill our Father, or at least to take him away and use him ill, for there was great danger of such things. Others thought they were come to turn us out. I shall not have place to say all about it, so in short they required to see all the best things belonging to the church, to come into the convent, to see the best things belonging to it, to see the Abbess, to drink of her wine, &c. They tried at the Inclosure gate to get in, and kept the street gate fast, so that no one might get in to help us. I leave you to judge the fright we was all in. At the last the Confessor got them away by giving them money.

"The 20th of February, or thereabouts, three others came, and begged beer. We sent them as much as they chose, and they went away content.

"The second whole week in Lent we suffered much with fright, for that week was fixed upon for tendering their horrible Oath to all Ecclesiastics and Religious, men and women, and all religious that would not take it was to be turned out of their convents. We expected it with the rest, for we all resolved to give a thousand lives, if we had as many, rather than have forfeited our souls. My only comfort was that I should be a martyr, but I find I was not worthy of so great a blessing.

"The French troops began to return from Holland on the 11th of March. Daily many passed through this town, and a great number stayed in it, and a thousand of these unhappy

creatures plotted together to plunder this town entirely on Palm Sunday night, if not to destroy the town and massacre us all. On the eve, Saturday ye 23rd of March, at eleven o'clock at night, began a dreadful alarm for the whole town, which lasted until about six o'clock at night on Palm Sunday. The cause of the alarm was a great number of French troops began again then to come into the town from Holland, and our good God, for our safety, had given the French in the town a great fright which they had had for some days that the Imperials and Prussians were very near, and when the French came in, the guards did not know their own troops, made a dreadful alarm, and was mad with fright, as well as the rest in town, and their fright continued and also the troops continued coming in all that night and next day; and although numbers only passed through, notwithstanding the town was so full that the house could not hold them; and such a number there was that streets and lanes were so full of them that one might have walked upon their heads. Some of those the thousand that plotted our ruin, impeached the others, and some of the officers that was still coming on with their troops got knowledge of it, and was so frightened that they took them by by-roads, to avoid coming into the town, for fear of being massacred. After five in the afternoon on Sunday, they began to storm their drums to that excess that it was frightful to hear them. We did not know what to think they were agoing to do with us; but thank God, their fright increased so much that they did not dare to stay any longer in the town, and by six o'clock they were all gone; and thus they were frustrated in their wicked designs of ruining this town as they also was of the ruin of this country the second week in Lent.

"Monday the 25th came in four Imperial Hussars and cut in pieces the Tree of Liberty and burnt the Red Cap. Good Friday came in 5,000 or more Prussians and went off next day, and then came in a great many thousands more and a number of Cannons and horses &c. both days. They left us on Easter Sunday morning.

"I have not place to mention particulars, but thanks be to Almighty God, who has delivered us from both his enemies and ours in so wonderful a manner: all say had it lasted eight days more, the whole country would have been ruined."

The retreat of the French for the time relieved the anxiety of the nuns; but the following year, the renewed success of the republican troops made the position of the nuns again critical, and during the summer of 1794, they all had to abandon their convents and take to flight. The first community to leave their convent was that of the Holy Sepulchre at Liège. This happened towards the end of May, the town being then in a state of alarm and the arrival of the French expected daily. The Jesuits had already quitted their "Academy," and the nuns were advised to follow their example. They heard Mass for the last time in their own Chapel at one o'clock in the morning of Ascension Day, and left in a body before daybreak for Maestricht, still entertaining a hope that when times became better, they might return to Liège. The party consisted of thirty-five choir nuns (including novices), fourteen lay sisters, and twenty-five school children. The pathetic scene of their departure from the convent is described by one of them in the following words:— [1]

"After Mass, having taken what little refreshment we could get, we were all desired to repair to the cloister facing the inclosure door. Here we waited some time in deep silence and dreadful suspense. At length the door opened, and Mr. Clifton [2] appeared, and desired us all to follow him. Each nun had been provided with a piece of black stuff about a yard in width and 3½ in length, like the Falles which the common people at Liège wear over their heads. This was to serve all purposes, preserving us from the rain, concealing our religious dress, and covering us like a veil. About 3 o'clock in the morning we set out two by two, in deep silence, all crying most bitterly, many not having seen the outside of the inclosure door for many years. Most of us went stumbling along, as our heavy thick falles were extremely inconvenient to us. At the outside of the convent we met a few French Emigrants whom Mr. Clifton had engaged to accompany us to the waterside, and all but 8 or 10 persons walked to the boats, each carrying her own little packet, which consisted of night clothes, Breviary, and such like things. The French gentlemen who attended us and seemed much affected by this moving scene, insisted on carrying them for

[1] *History of New Hall Community*, p. 98.
[2] Rev. F. Clifton, the chaplain to the community.

us. It was a very wet morning. When we arrived at the riverside, we were much disappointed, for instead of a large barge which the Coal merchant had always promised us, and in which he said we should find every necessary accommodation and would hold over a 100 persons, we found nothing but a Coal boat, covered with a few boards, so filthy and so small that only half of us could get into it. He was then obliged to unload part of our goods out of another boat, and accommodate it as well as he could, so that we were detained there till 6 o'clock. We carried with us Ham, cold meat, &c. that we might have some refreshment before we arrived at Maestricht, as we were all much spent and fatigued, what with concern, and want of rest, as some of us had not been in bed for some nights.

"We arrived at Maestricht about 1 o'clock. It rained very hard and we hired Coaches to go to the house we had taken, but when we arrived there, we had not chairs to sit down upon, nor could we get bedding out of the Boats that night, so that we sat or lay down upon the floor. . . . Night came on, and as they could not bring much baggage from the boats that day, and that what they did bring was soaked with the rain, some of us slept on chairs, and many on the floor with a bundle under our head."

The nuns remained at Maestricht for five weeks, hoping for a time that affairs might mend and that they might be able to return to their convent at Liège. Such, however, was not to be the case, and when towards the end of June it became known that the French were advancing, they decided to return to England. They accordingly set out on July 8 for Rotterdam, where they arrived on the 22nd. On their journey through Protestant Holland, they were confronted with an unlooked-for difficulty, for they were dressed in their religious habits, and no such sight had been seen there within living memory. They found it necessary therefore to keep themselves in strict privacy, and did not even venture to go to Mass on Sunday, for fear of attracting attention.

On their arrival at Rotterdam, they found the Franciscans from Princenhof, Bruges, who were starting for Delft the following day, intending to take ship thence for England. They were all dressed in secular costume, and by their assist-

ance, the Sepulchrine nuns fitted themselves out similarly, and now only awaited a convenient vessel, to sail for England. They had not long to wait. On July 29 they set out from Rotterdam; but the wind being contrary, they were unable to put to sea, and did not finally get off until August 13.

Two other religious communities had already passed through Rotterdam during the last week or two, the Benedictines of Brussels and the Austin nuns of Bruges. The former of these had been among the last of the communities to leave their convent. This was not because Brussels had been in a quieter state than other towns, but rather for a contrary reason. The French had occupied the city since the previous November, and the Paris sacrileges found many a counterpart at Brussels. The well-known Church of St. Gudule was desecrated, and the convent chapel itself was only saved by the prompt forethought of the sacristan, who removed all the plate and valuables. Still the nuns clung to a hope that their convent might be spared, till one day the governor of the town told them that their position was no longer safe, and called upon them to leave within twenty-four hours. This was on Saturday, June 21. The following morning an early Mass was said, at which all communicated, and a scene similar to that already described in the case of the Liège nuns, took place. There was this additional element of sadness at Brussels, that the lady abbess's heart failed her, and she refused to leave. The other nuns had therefore to set out without their abbess, leaving her in the house, together with a refugee Carthusian prior, who was living in the visitors' quarters.

The party who set out numbered twenty-eight, of whom twenty-three were members of the community, two were French nuns, two French priests, and the remaining one the sacristan of the convent. They travelled in three coaches and a waggon, and went first to Antwerp. The following day the Ghent Benedictines also passed through Antwerp, numbering twelve "dames" and nine lay sisters. In their hurried departure from their convent, they had received kind and opportune assistance from the Duke of York, who having previously used their convent for his military store, now repaid his debt to them by giving them the use of such of his military waggons as were necessary

to convey them, with the few effects that they were able to take, to Antwerp.

It does not seem that the two Benedictine communities, who were so closely connected, met one another during these sad days. The Ghent nuns were being conducted by Mr. Diccon-son, of Wrightlington Hall, Lancashire, who had come over from England expressly in order to be of service to them, and he had been able to arrange for the greater number to embark at Antwerp immediately on their arrival there. The Brussels nuns were not equally successful in finding a ship about to set out, and being afraid to remain, in view of the progress of the French army, they hired a barge, and proceeded up the Dutch canals to Rotterdam, where they arrived late at night on June 26. Here they were more fortunate than at Antwerp: they succeeded at once in hearing of a boat preparing to start for London. On July 2 they embarked. A few days later the Dominicanesses of Brussels followed them. The houses of the Carmelites—Hoogstraat, Lierre and Antwerp—were likewise broken up, and that of the Augustinian Canonesses at Louvain, as well as that at Bruges, to which we have already alluded. The Benedictine convent at Ypres alone remained. The nuns there were nearly all Irish, and it would appear that they owed their deliverance to an Irish officer in the French army, who at the critical moment interposed on behalf of his country-women.[1]

The vessels bearing the English communities across the North Sea encountered numerous dangers, and had several narrow escapes. In one case a leak was sprung in the night, and the ship was half full of water before morning. In several instances they were fired on by French frigates; on one occasion a Dutch pilot almost delivered them into the very hands of the enemy. Once at least a ship was on fire; while the casualties common to the sea, in days before steam navigation, were frequent—vessels running aground, or colliding with other ships, or being detained by contrary winds, or driven out of their course, or the like. In some cases the voyage only occupied two days; in others, an unfavourable wind or other circumstances prolonged it to four or five times that period. The nuns however survived all these risks. Not a single life was

[1] See the *Irish Dames of Ypres*, by Rev. P. Nolan, O.S.B., p. 288.

lost, and although in some instances the voyage was prolonged sufficiently to cause grave anxiety, in the end all landed safely in England. And within the next twelve months, they were followed by most of the communities in France who had at length regained their liberty.

CHAPTER XXIV.

FOUNDATION OF THE COLLEGES IN ENGLAND.

1793-1795.

MOST people realised at the time that the breaking up of the English houses on the Continent was final. Some indeed, who had lived many years, often almost all their lives, in their homes "beyond the seas," clung for a while to the hope of going back when the progress of political events should render it possible; but to those who were able to understand the signs of the times, everything pointed the other way. They saw that some years at least would have to elapse before the state of any continental country would have quieted down enough to warrant a community to re-make a tie once broken, while on the other hand, the outlook in England was becoming daily brighter for Catholics, and there seemed reason to hope that if the foundation of colleges and convents could be accomplished without noise or disturbance, the English people might become gradually accustomed to seeing them in their midst. Even if attention were to be called to the clause in the late Act forbidding their foundation, it was considered that the fact of the communities having been so abruptly turned out of house and home on the Continent was an answer which the average Englishman might be expected to accept.

We will consider first the colleges and houses of education. Theirs was in every respect a hard case. All their funds and other possessions were lost, and in making a new start in England, everything had to be reared up from the foundation. This would have appeared a long and uphill work to look forward to; yet this consideration does not seem to have dispirited the promoters, partly perhaps on account of the satisfaction they felt at being in England again after the lapse

of two and a quarter centuries, but partly also because the urgency of making provision for the moment overshadowed the difficulties of the future. They were face to face with the problem of how to live and how to carry on the all-important work of Catholic education, so rudely interrupted: and in consequence they were glad to devote themselves to beginning any new work which might hold out the prospect of an eventual solution of their difficulties.

The college which claims our first attention is that of St. Edmund at Old Hall, which was the diocesan college of the London District. But the Catholic colleges and secondary schools in other parts of England also call for notice, for the events which led to the foundation of all of them were closely bound up together, and they possess more than a local interest. The names of Ushaw and Stonyhurst and Downside and Ampleforth have grown familiar to us by their long and honourable history. They form an integral part of Catholic England. Incidentally therefore we shall be brought across the circumstances of their establishment; but so far as the London District is concerned, St. Edmund's necessarily takes precedence, especially in view of the claim which it shares with Ushaw of being descended from the ancient College of Douay, which was the chief nursery of the Secular Clergy of England, and the work of which, so far as the South is concerned, found a continuation at Old Hall.

The English College at Douay may be considered to have come to an end when the students and professors were sent to prison on October 16, 1793. News of what had occurred soon reached England. It was not entirely unexpected: the wonder was rather that it had not come sooner. England and France had been at war more than six months, and there was no reason to suppose that the British houses would permanently escape the fate which had long since overtaken all French establishments of the same character. As soon as the news of the actual imprisonment reached England, Dr. Douglass felt the urgent need of making some provision for the education of the clergy without delay. His thoughts naturally turned towards his own school at Old Hall Green, and he conceived the idea of making it develop into a new Douay. Before taking any step, he consulted Dr. Milner as usual.

The latter answered with a long letter which gives a comprehensive account of the general state of the questions with which the vicars apostolic were confronted, and is therefore worth quoting in full. It ran as follows:—[1]

"WINTON, *October* 27, 1793.

"MY LORD,

"In obedience to your orders, I write to state what occurs to me on the subject of ye proposed Seminary at Old Hall. I own that I cannot but highly approve of it in the existing circumstances. I was afraid you were going to risk great sums on Bishop Gibson's speculations in the North, who, as you mentioned already, talked of building round whole acres. Now highly as I respect that worthy man, I cannot help saying that I do not think he has the talent of governing a college, if we are to give credit to what those say who have lived under him, and much less of managing money matters, if we are to decide by the specimens he has already given. I could wish indeed that the Seminary was as far removed as possible from London, to prevent visits to that scene of corruption, and also visitors from it; but that inconveniency will be removed by strict rules and discipline. I consider this as a direct answer to your Lordship's first question. As to your second, whether Old Hall will be a proper place for a general College, that I am not qualified to speak to, nor do I think in the present circumstances that it would be advisable for the Bishops to determine on it. If they are enabled to take care of their respective subjects and keep up a succession of missionaries, the essential point will be gained, and no time will be lost. Hence I would rather recommend to fit up barns and stables at Old Hall than in the present circumstances to contract any great expense by substantial buildings. But it occurs to me, in the case of Divinity and Philosophy being taught at Old Hall, and men formed for the ministry, a different kind of superior from Mr. Potier will be necessary. I even doubt whether it will be practicable to unite together a Seminary and a nursery such as I take the school to be at present. In this case, if you would not suspect me of having

[1] *Westminster Archives.*

an eye to my own private gratification, I should recommend the erecting of a good Grammar School, such as would supersede the necessity of a Cisalpine one, and serve at the same time as a preparation for ye mission, as well as for Catholics at large, in your house over the way.[1] This establishment would be equally useful, and even necessary in some shape or another (as matters now stand), whether your Divines are enabled to return to Douay or not. I think, however, that the success of both undertakings, I mean that of the Seminary and that of the school, would greatly depend on the qualifications of the respective superiors, and I think that previously to any general undertaking, whether that of a school or that of a general Seminary, it would be advisable for a council to be held of the leading clergymen and, if you thought proper, of a few laymen, to concert a plan of education and discipline adapted to the present circumstances. Your Lordship may perhaps, like other Douay people, laugh at me, but I am sure that many schools in England, and in particular the College or school in this city, teach Latin and Greek in less time and in a more solid manner than ever they did at our Colleges. . . . I beg your blessing, and remain, my Lord,

"Your Lordship's most respectful and dutiful servant,

"J. MILNER."

The advice tendered in this letter was substantially followed by Bishop Douglass. He determined to begin the "Seminary" at Old Hall, being at the same time not without hope that it might develop sufficiently to satisfy the requirements of the laity for a "General College"; but he refrained for the present from embarking on any building scheme until the future should become more clear.

The record of how he put his design into execution is given in his own handwriting in his diary, in a passage which has often been quoted, but must be given here once more:—

"1793. On the 12th of November I took Messrs. William Beauchamp and John Law to Old Hall, and on the 16th, the

[1] This alludes to a house at Winchester, close to Milner's church, left to the Bishop of the London District by Bishop James Talbot, afterwards occupied for many years by the Benedictine nuns from Brussels.

feast of St. Edmund, Archbishop of Canterbury, we commenced studies, or established the new College there, a substitute for Douay. Mr. Thomas Cook, who had been at Old Hall Green half a year, employed in teaching the children, and Mr. John Devereux joined the other two.

"These four communicated at my hands. I said Mass, and after Mass exposed the Blessed Sacrament; and these four, with Mr. Potier, sang the *O Salutaris*, *Pange Lingua*, and *Laudate Dominum omnes gentes* ad finem.

"Thus was the new College instituted, under the patronage of St. Edmund, Archbishop of Canterbury, the afore-mentioned students recommencing their studies in Divinity. Felix, faustumque sit!"

Within a short time after this, the Rev. W. H. Coombes Junior, the Douay professor who had escaped, arrived in London. Like his uncle, the Rev. William Coombes of Meadgate, he belonged to the Western District; but at the urgent request of Bishop Douglass, he obtained permission from Bishop Walmesley to go to Old Hall, and undertake the care of the new "Divines" or Theological students there. Within a few weeks nearly twenty more refugees had arrived from Douay, some belonging to the South, others to the North, and these added to the thirty boys at Mr. Potier's school brought up the total number of students to between fifty and sixty.

It must not be supposed from the extract in Dr. Douglass's diary that he considered the question of the foundation of the new Douay as finally settled. Many schemes and counter-schemes were put forward during the next two years, and more than once it appeared as though the infant establishment at Old Hall would have a very brief existence. We shall have to trace some of the alternatives suggested, which seemed at times on the point of being carried out; but in the end the establishment at Old Hall survived, and the dedication to St. Edmund solemnly made by Dr. Douglass on November 16, 1793, has remained that of the College ever since.

During the progress of the negotiations, it was generally conceded that it was desirable to have one general College for all England, the only question being where it should be. Dr. Gibson was of course anxious to secure the new foundation in his district, and we begin now the long and weary discussion

between him and Dr. Douglass as to whether the College should be in the North or in the South.

At the beginning, Dr. Douglass had this advantage in favour of his contention, that there was a school already existing at Old Hall Green, and it would only be necessary to develop and enlarge it. The first step in that direction had indeed already been taken, for Theology was now being actually taught there. In order to meet this argument, Dr. Gibson also looked to an existing school, at Tudhoe, a little village not far from Durham. The school, which was the property of Sir John Lawson, was kept by Rev. Arthur Storey.

Bishop Gibson was fortunate in securing the co-operation of an influential section of the laity, including Mr. Weld, Lord Arundell, and Lord Clifford, who had been educated at Liège, and would naturally have been supporters of the ex-Jesuits. A proposition had in fact been put forward at the end of the year 1793, that the "Gentlemen of Liège" should found a school in England, and apparently Mr. Weld had already indicated his willingness to offer them the property at Stonyhurst for that purpose.[1] But they could not see their way to accept the offer. There was no reason at that time to anticipate that they would have to leave Liège, and they had not as yet sufficient men to think of a new foundation. We learn their views from the following letter of Rev. Marmaduke Stone, who had succeeded Dr. Strickland as President, to Bishop Douglass:—[2]

"Liège, *January* 13, 1794.

"My Lord,

"The reason of my writing to your Lordship at present is a report I hear is spread about us in England that we mean to fit up a College there immediately. I cannot conceive whence such a report can have arisen. I should certainly think it my duty to inform your Lordship of it, had we any such intentions. I am the more surprised at the report as my language in all the letters I have ever written to England on

[1] This appears from a letter of Milner in the *Westminster Archives*. The letter is undated, but from its contents it appears to have been written not later than January, 1794.

[2] *Westminster Archives*.

the subject has always been uniformly the same, that we have neither money nor hands for the execution of such a plan at present; but that in about four years' time, when we shall have a regular and annual procession of young ecclesiastics, I hope to be able to set up a school which I am persuaded will be very advantageous to religion. When I told your Lordship in my last that I and the Gentlemen in the Academy wished all success to the Seminary[1] intended to be set up in England, and were ready to concur to it as far as ever it was in our power, my meaning was that in case a subscription was necessary, and set on footing for the Douay College transferred by the unhappy circumstances of the time to England, I was willing to contribute my little mite. . . .

"I am, with due respect,

"Your Lordship's most obedt. humble servt.

"M. STONE."

This letter, and the attitude of the laymen mentioned, for a time convinced Dr. Douglass that the new Douay would stand a better chance of success in the North; and this feeling was strengthened when the Cisalpine party showed signs of coming into the same agreement. He wrote as follows to Bishop Walmesley, on February 11, 1794:—[2]

"The Gentlemen of Liège have declared that they cannot undertake to open a school in England these four or five years to come: in consequence of this declaration on the part of Liège, Lord Clifford, Mr. Weld and those who act with them and the lay Gentlemen of the North wish to establish a school for Douay immediately. Tudhoe, a village near Durham, is proposed by the Gentlemen of the North for this school. There is a school there already, under the care of Mr. Storey, which accordingly is intended to be enlarged for the purpose. I'm expecting a letter from Bishop Gibson on this business. Lord Petre and some other Cisalpine Gentlemen have declared that they will support this school, which is to be substituted for Douay, and that they are willing to abandon the plan they had formed of a school."

Dr. Douglass also wrote to Dr. Milner in the same sense.

[1] *I.e.* St. Edmund's, Old Hall. [2] *Clifton Archives*, vol. vii.

The latter's answer is given below. In view of the long discussions and many experiments which took place during the latter half of the nineteenth century, it is interesting to find that the very same problems had occupied Milner's thoughts before the end of the eighteenth. He wrote on February 14, 1794, as follows:— [1]

"The reasons which your Lordship states for preferring the North to the South for establishing a College are certainly very weighty. The only doubt I have is concerning the propriety of attempting a College on the singular plan of ours abroad, where everything was taught from figures up to Theology. I think a different kind of discipline, of education and of superiors is requisite for that College where our young men of family are to be instructed, and that Seminary where our priests are to be formed for the ministry: and if our Divines of Douay had been sent elsewhere into a house appropriated for the purpose, to study theology &c., I am persuaded we should have studied harder, been less dissipated and better formed for the ministry than we actually are in general. It is moreover to be noticed that the place of education for our gentry must be liable unavoidably to much more dissipation than took place abroad. There must be still more of fiddling, dancing, drawing, spouting &c., or else the College will not take, and some Cisalpine school will have the means of doing irreparable mischief."

The scheme for the college at Tudhoe seemed likely to be realised. A printed appeal was issued by the three vicars apostolic, dated June 20, 1794.[2] The Church students at Old Hall were ordered to hold themselves in readiness to move to the North. On August 16, Mr. Storey wrote that Bishop Gibson had found a more suitable house at a short distance from Tudhoe, and would be ready to receive the new-comers almost immediately.

But at the last moment the whole scheme fell to the ground. Two reasons may be assigned for this. One was that the Cisalpines and Bishop Talbot came to an agreement for conducting Oscott as a joint school in the management of which the laymen were to have an important voice. According to the agreement come to, there was to be a board of Governors, who

[1] *Westminster Archives.*
[2] See *History of St. Edmund's College*, p. 110.

Old College, Oscott.

were to make themselves financially responsible for the conduct of the school. They were to have also a right of veto on the appointment of the President, who was however to be nominated by the Bishop. The Bishop was also "to have the sole direction of all religious concerns"; but "the Governors in conjunction with the President and Vice-President [were to] have the direction of all the lay scholars". Dr. Bew had already been living at Oscott some months, having solved his difficulty with Bishop Walmesley by simply coming away; for it appeared that there was nothing in the *Regula Missionis* to prevent him doing so. At Oscott Bishop Talbot had entrusted him with the care of one or two boys destined for the Church, the nucleus of an intended permanent foundation. Under the new board—known at Oscott as the "Old Government"—he was to continue as president, and to be assisted by Rev. Thomas Potts as vice-president. The pension for each boy was to be £30 a year.

This agreement having been come to, it of course followed that those who were interested in it would not lend any active support to the proposed foundation at Tudhoe.

The other reason for abandoning the scheme had an even more important bearing on Catholic education in England. This was that owing to the success of the French arms in the Netherlands, the ex-Jesuits found themselves forced to quit Liège in a body, and, crossing to England, decided to accept Mr. Weld's offer and establish themselves at Stonyhurst. Dr. Douglass thus records the fact in his diary:—

"The Gentlemen of the Academy from Liège are settled at Stonyhurst. Mr. Stone, President of the Academy, arrived on the 17th of August, 1794, with some masters and boys belonging to the South. The remaining part of the Academy sailed from Harwich to Hull."

The foundation of the now celebrated college at Stonyhurst on a permanent basis was not altogether a simple matter, owing to the somewhat anomalous position of the fathers. At Liège they had been living practically as Jesuits; but on their return to England they came under the jurisdiction of the bishops, just as though they were ordinary secular priests, as of course technically they were. They were willing enough to show all proper subordination to the episcopal character; but they

wished to keep the election of their president or rector in their own hands,—a claim which Bishop Gibson, in whose district Stonyhurst was situated, was not willing to concede. Indeed, he showed at first considerable opposition to them which was only gradually overcome, and matters do not seem to have been satisfactorily adjusted until the spring of 1796, when they received a special Brief from Rome dated February 14 of that year, giving them similar rights with respect to the establishment of the college to those they enjoyed at Liège.

The natural result of the transplanting of Liège Academy to Stonyhurst was that the supporters of the Jesuits removed their patronage from the proposed foundation at Tudhoe, and the project of a college there was given up. Bishop Gibson found a more suitable house for his own purposes at Crook Hall, near Durham, where he made an independent foundation of his own. Under these circumstances Bishop Douglass turned his eyes once more to Old Hall, and thus the desired union was not obtained.

The president of Crook Hall was the Rev. Thomas Eyre, who had been the fellow-student of Dr. Gibson at Douay. The bishop himself had also been president there for ten years. They were both deeply attached to their *Alma Mater*, and their natural ambition was to reproduce Douay life and customs at Crook Hall so far as the changed circumstances would permit. In order to accord better with English habits, the whole day was put an hour later—the time of rising being six instead of five, and dinner being put at one in place of mid-day. In other respects the arrangements were almost identical with those at Douay. Dr. Lingard, then only in deacon's orders, became vice-president. He was ordained priest the following year. Both he and Mr. Eyre continued all the time that the college was at Crook Hall, and both were still in office at the migration to Ushaw fourteen years later. The original six students at Crook Hall soon increased to three or four times that number, and later on some sixty or seventy students were housed there.

The failure to realise the scheme for a general college was a great disappointment to Bishop Douglass. However, he determined to make the best of it, and to concentrate his efforts on his own college at St. Edmund's. He wrote to Bishop

Walmesley on November 10, 1794, in this sense.[1] "Bishop Gibson has taken a house in the North," he said, "and his Divines left Old Hall Green last week. This untoward circumstance has given me much uneasiness. However, after consultation with my clergy, and such whose advice and friendship can be depended on, we have determined to continue Old Hall Green as the substitute for Douay and to exert ourselves to promote study, piety &c. there. . . . I go down to Old Hall on Thursday to settle all this business, and on my return to Town we shall enter on a plan for obtaining subscriptions. I hope your Lordship will not disapprove of our plan. I'm not without hope that the Gentlemen of the North will see their error in leaving us, and will return, that our wishes for union may be fulfilled: at all events, we shall be united in spirit and in doctrine." On November 22, 1794, a printed appeal for subscriptions for the college at Old Hall Green was issued, signed by Dr. Douglass.[2]

Three months after this, the collegians of Douay and St. Omer were set at liberty, and arrived in England. They landed at Dover on March 2, 1795. The Benedictines found their way to Acton Burnell, in Shropshire, the seat of Sir Edward Smythe, one of their former pupils. He received them with great cordiality, and for a time the community resided there. The Benedictines from Dieulouard, in Lorraine, were likewise there for a time, under their prior, Rev. R. Marsh. They had been in possession before the arrival of the Douay community; but when it became evident that one or other must go elsewhere, they gave way, and after several migrations, eventually settled at Ampleforth in Yorkshire, in the year 1803. The St. Gregory's community remained at Acton Burnell until their removal to Downside in 1814.

With respect to the seculars, the arrival in England of so many prominent men caused the re-opening of the whole question as to the founding of a general college. The North *versus* South dispute raged as before. The Northerners, however, based their contention not on any claim in consequence of the Catholics being more numerous and influential in that part of the country, but solely upon the more practical consideration of the lower

[1] *Clifton Archives*, vol. vii.

[2] The Appeal is printed in full in the *History of St. Edmund's College*, p. 119.

market value of provisions and coal. They seem to have converted Dr. Douglass once more to having the new foundation in the North, provided that a suitable house could be obtained. It was agreed that in that case both Crook Hall in the North and Old Hall Green in the South should give way in favour of the new foundation. It was not, however, proposed to close Old Hall. The situation was so convenient, and the property so good that it was determined to continue its use in some way for the benefit of Catholic education. Milner strongly urged that it should be formed into a good lay school which might replace the Cisalpine school at Oscott. He wrote to Bishop Douglass on March 30 giving his views:—[1]

"To preserve the influence and credit of the clergy which will otherwise be undermined by ex-Jesuits, monks and Benedictines," he wrote, "I adhere to my old opinion that we ought to have a good classical school, with masters of first-rate talents, and head superiors who are not only capable of conducting, but also of forming a College, and who are themselves masters of the whole circle of literature &c. We ought to have this besides our Seminary, or else I am positive in my opinion, the above-mentioned bodies, and Stonyhurst in particular, will have three parts in four of the Gentry to educate. Bishop Gibson's fears of hurting the Seminary by a subsidiary College were very ill founded. However, all depends in this latter school upon the creative genius of the Head-master. If I were to speak at random, I think that Old Hall as such a College, with Mr. Stapleton for President and Procurator, Mr. Coombes for head teacher, and Lingard for assistant, after a plan of studies had been formed and digested amongst the best qualified of our body at large, with the advice of some well-disposed seculars, would soon be the first Catholic School in the kingdom, would keep up the interests of the clergy in the great families, and thereby be the bulwark of our Seminary, to which it would occasionally send recruits of young men of family: whilst those parents who chuse to send their children at once to the Seminary, would have the option of so doing."

Milner's scheme seems to have been substantially adopted. Dr. Stapleton consented to preside over a "Humanity School" at Old Hall, and matters had proceeded so far that an adver-

[1] *Westminster Archives.*

tisement of the proposed foundation appeared in the Directory for the following year, which in those days went to press in the summer. For the "New Douay" a large house at Thorpe Arch, near Wetherby, in Yorkshire, was chosen, and negotiations for its purchase were already in progress.

A variety of circumstances combined to prevent both these schemes from being put into execution. One was that Mr. Pitt, in speaking to Dr. Stapleton, strongly urged that no new foundation should be made, lest public opinion might be aroused; whereas, he said, if the new college was built at Old Hall, people would only regard it as the continuation of an establishment already existing. Mgr. Erskine was strongly impressed by the Prime Minister's words, and declared himself in favour of Old Hall, desiring that Rev. John Daniel, the last President of Douay, should go there to resume his office. Dr. Douglass also had by this time veered round to that side. By his desire, Dr. Stapleton set out for the North in order to see Mr. Daniel and report to him the turn that affairs had taken.

He found him, together with Bishop Gibson, on Thursday, June 25, at Crook Hall, where they had arrived the previous day. There is a tradition at Ushaw that he had been nominally installed as president, in order to make a direct continuation in the line of Douay presidents at Crook Hall;[1] but,

[1] The authority always quoted for this statement is a letter of Dr. Lingard, written to Dr. Tate, President of Ushaw, more than half a century later, in November, 1848. This letter has been recently published in the *Ushaw Magazine*. The following extract gives the essential part:—

"On St. Peter and Paul [June 29, 1795] Mr. Daniel, the President of Douai, came, a most important man, for he was in law proprietor of all the monies in England belonging to Douai. Remember that; it will explain what follows. He came with Dr. Gibson. The next day Mr. Eyre resigned. Dr. Daniel was installed President, and Mr. Eyre Vice-President. Before the end of the octave, Dr. Stapleton, then President, I believe, of Old Hall arrived. He was closeted with Mr. Daniel for hours, and the next day Mr. D. resigned the Presidentship, and went away with Dr. Stapleton. What became of Mr. Daniel afterwards I know not" (*Ushaw Magazine*, March, 1906, p. 24).

The actual letters written at that time by Dr. Stapleton and Rev. John Daniel are preserved at Old Hall, and were printed in the *History of St. Edmund's College* (p. 131 *seq.*). Comparing these with Dr. Lingard's account written after an interval of fifty-three years, we find that his dates are somewhat inaccurate. It appears from the letters that Mr. Daniel left York for Crook Hall, in company with Dr. Gibson, on Tuesday, June 23. On the following day, the 24th, he writes from Crook Hall pressing for a revival of the Tudhoe scheme, and it was only in the event of that being negatived that he contemplated the new Douay being at Crook Hall; adding that he would "not come to any fixed resolution" till he

at any rate, on the arrival of Dr. Stapleton, he abandoned the scheme of establishing the new Douay in the North at all. The following is his letter to Bishop Douglass:—[1]

"My Lord,

"You know my reasons for giving the preference to the North, the cheapness of certain articles, and the less danger of dissipation; but the least insinuation to the contrary by Monsignor Erskine is amply satisfactory. As Mr. Stapleton is going on farther, I hope to be in London before he returns to town. Believe me to be,

"Your Lordship's most respectful and h'ble servant,

"J. Daniel.

"Crook Hall, *June* 25, 1795."

Immediately after this, whatever doubt remained about the future of Old Hall was set at rest by the munificent gift of £10,000 by Mr. Sone, a rich miller of Bedhampton, near Havant, which was to be applied either to a general college for all England; or, if so decided, for the college to be built in the London District. He paid £2,000 down on July 19; the remainder was to be in the form of a legacy, but he was so old and infirm that it was clear that the legatees would not have long to wait for their money. In the event, he died in the following October.

Mr. Sone's promise was made to Dr. Poynter. As soon as it was known, Dr. Douglass at once planned out a large new college to be built at Old Hall, and began actually building without delay. Every effort was made to induce Mr. Daniel to become president, Mgr. Erskine especially bringing to bear all the influence in his power. When Mr. Daniel knew, however, that Bishop Gibson was averse to the scheme, he refused to identify himself with it, and returned to Lancashire.

heard from Bishop Douglass. The following day again, the 25th, he writes that Dr. Stapleton has been there, and in response to Mgr. Erskine's wishes, he (Mr. Daniel) is returning to London. It thus appears that whatever is indicated by the "installation" described by Dr. Lingard, it did not last beyond a day, and on that very day Mr. Daniel was writing to Bishop Douglass that he had not come to any fixed resolution on the matter.

No record of this incident exists, so far as the present writer is aware, of earlier date than Dr. Lingard's letter in 1848.

[1] See *History of St. Edmund's College*, p. 134.

Bishop Douglass accordingly appointed Dr. Gregory Stapleton, president for the time, though with the express proviso that should Mr. Daniel or any other in his stead be appointed later on, Dr. Stapleton was to hold himself in readiness to resign. It was also provided that Rev. John Potier, who up to that time had been governing the students, should remain as "Parish Priest". A full constitution was drawn out, the original of which is still preserved. Dr. Stapleton set out to take possession on August 5, accompanied by Rev. Joseph Hodgson, the late Vice-President of Douay, who was already settled at St. George's Fields. The Vice-President of St. Edmund's was to be Dr. Poynter, and he was also to be prefect of studies, having already occupied that post for eight years at Douay. On August 19, the foundation stone of the new college was laid at Old Hall. Bishop Douglass was unfortunately unable to be present himself at the ceremony, and his representative, Dean Lindow, laid the stone, in the presence of the president, professors and students, numbering between seventy and eighty.

Bishop Douglass was full of hope for the future of his new college. On the same day that the new constitution came into force, he wrote to Bishop Walmesley as follows:—[1]

"Castle Street, No. 4, Holborn.
"*August 15th*, '95.

"My Lord,

". . . I have proceeded to fix the College at Old Hall Green. Mr. Daniel having declined to accept the Presidency of it, I appointed Mr. Stapleton, late President of St. Omer's, to be President of it, and Mr. Poynter to be the Vice-President. As almost all the Masters or Professors of Douay and St. Omer's belonged to the London District, they now are employed in the new College; and I am happy in saying that young men of more shining talents, or greater character for virtue, discipline and every kind of merit, never entered a College in any country. They are all united in the ties of friendship, and seem to have only one heart and one soul: and that totally directed to raise the College to eminence, and thereby promote the common cause of religion. I can't help adding that Mr. Coombes is transported with joy at the establishment being opened with so promising a prospect of success.

[1] *Clifton Archives*, vol. viii.

"Mr. Daniel returned into the North, taking with him a Mr. Smith,[1] Professor of Philosophy, whom I should have been glad to have detained. What Mr. Daniel will do, or what B. Gibson will do, I cannot tell. Neither one nor the other has written to me since the 22nd of last month.

"It is not *certain* whether Oscott will be given up or not. I'm of opinion it will be given up as soon as the College at Old Hall Green is built. I'm going to build next Monday at a little distance, *viz.* 400 feet, more or less, from the present house, as much of the new College as will be wanted for the Winter, and to prepare for completing the whole next Summer. The present house will then be wholly for the little school as hitherto. Mr. Stapleton will have the superintendence of both houses, but the two houses will never meet except in the Refectory and Church. Different playgrounds, different Masters &c. are intended. I wish to include both schools under one general establishment on a principle of economy.

"I remain, my Lord,

"Your obedt. h'ble servant,

"J. DOUGLASS."

Although Dr. Douglass considered that the question as to the college was now settled, this view was not universally accepted. The fact that Mr. Daniel had refused the presidency of St. Edmund's made many regard the matter as still open. Before the end of August an important meeting of the clergy of Lancashire, held at Preston, passed a resolution in favour of establishing a general college in the North,[2] and Dr. Gibson continued to hope for some such settlement. He visited St. Edmund's early in December, and afterwards called on Bishop Douglass in London, but was very reserved as to his intentions. The following letter from Bishop Douglass to Bishop Walmesley shows that by the end of the year it had become known that he intended to continue Crook Hall if it was possible. The letter is undated, but from internal evidence it is clear that it must have been written at the very end of 1795 or within the first day or two of the new year:—[3]

[1] Rev. Thomas Smith, afterwards Vicar Apostolic of the Northern District.
[2] See *History of St. Edmund's College*, p. 152. [3] *Clifton Archives*, vol. ix.

"My Lord,

"You wish to know how we have settled the matter about the establishment of the College. I'm forced to acknowledge to you that our good friend Mr. Gibson while in town and on the business of the College, was unaccountable in the extreme. He would not hearken to our reasoning. Everybody here sought to gain him, but he continued obstinate: confessed he could not support his College in the North, and yet for uniting with us at Old Hall he neither would nor wouldn't. In that uncertainty he left London and went into Lancashire.

"On my return from Old Hall Green on Wednesday evening, I found a letter from him dated Claughton Hall, December 27, 1795, in which he says, 'All I have seen yet wish to have a College or Seminary in the North, tho' separate. I have however explained how things stood, and desired them after considering the matter to let me know their sentiments. I will therefore write to you later on, on this and other subjects. I write this lest you may think I have neglected to give you information as I told you.'

"Thus does Mr. Gibson write to me; while one of the students at Old Hall Green tells us that he has received a letter from Mr. Gradwell (a school-fellow of his at Douay) in which Mr. Gradwell says, 'It is now determined we are not to unite with you: we are to have a separate College in the North, and I and the two Haddocks (*sic*)[1] are going to Crook' (this is the name of the place where Mr. Gibson's young men have been assembled).

"I feel hurt at this determination. But patience. Bishop Berington had pledged himself to use his utmost endeavours to prevail on the Cisalpine Gentlemen to give up their school at Oscott, if the general College should be established at Old Hall Green. Now that Bishop Gibson will have a separate establishment, Bishop Berington is consequently released from his engagement. Notwithstanding, I am still decidedly of opinion that the Cisalpine School will soon be given up. Its warmest advocates have an high opinion of the Professors at

[1] Thomas and George Leo Haydock, both late students at Douay, and the latter at this time at St. Edmund's.

Old Hall Green. The Cisalpines find they have not the confidence of the public, and *individually* taken they wish it to be given up, to unite with Old Hall Green. Bishop Berington, I'm confident, also wishes it. . . . I remain, my Lord,

"Your humble servant in J. C.

"J. DOUGLASS."

With respect to the hoped-for closing of Oscott, Dr. Douglass turned out mistaken, and in the event, all the three establishments mentioned—Oscott, Crook Hall and St. Edmund's—continued, and all three exist in some form at the present day. Nevertheless, at the time there was considerable controversy as to the prudence of Bishop Gibson's action. He had practically all the Northern clergy on his side, but in the South the feeling was against him. This put him on his defence, as his letters written at that time show. The following letter gives a summary of his reasons: the letter was addressed to Bishop Walmesley, and dated January 6, 1796:—[1]

"MY LORD,

". . . I was called to London much against my inclination. I was informed there was to be only one single Seminary or College, and that this was ye desire of ye Propaganda, and his Holiness: and that ye place &c. were to be settled by ye Vicars Apostolic. I naturally asked whether all ye new establishments were included, and I said if not, there would be at least two, and not one only: and if those in ye North established by others were not included, it would answer little or no purpose for ye Bishop of ye North to join. On ye contrary, great confusion would probably be caused, and ye North would be separated from ye South in this respect. I said this in ye supposition that ye Seminary or College would be voted to be in ye South, as I had reason to think it would. I say ye Northern District would be ye same as separated, or worse: for if ye Bishop of that district encouraged the establishments that are now forming in it, and neglected ye one supposed to be out of it, it would be separated. If he did not encourage those in his own District, as it must

[1] *Clifton Archives*, vol. ix.

be expected, they would extol and commend each their own, and being on ye spot and in yc district must have weight, and confusion must be expected, and a want of union so much desired, and that support so necessary for him, and so he would be compelled to relinquish that out of his District.

"You have often wished us to unite in one College or Seminary; yet in your letter you plainly say that if all clergymen are bound to unite in ye same, uneasiness, discontent and confusion would be created. This plainly imports that you think some clergy should not be under ye same regulations that others are: or that there should be two kinds. I do not speak of ye four years you mention. I speak of ye regulations in general, or of all as clergy missioners, without regard to any number of years they may study: for to tell you ye truth, I do not like changes during ye course of studies amongst ye advanced when it can be helped. You seem plainly to tell me there must be a second College in which ye Superior may have as much power over ye subjects as all ye Bishops together, and all ye Superiors they may appoint over ye College or Seminary they may establish together. You may be assured that if one clergyman, or a collection of them have such power, the others will think they have an equal right of establishing themselves, so no union is to be expected. I told you long ago what would be ye consequence of having Clergy under different regulations in and out of ye places of their education. These consequences begin already to be felt by rendering the union of ye Clergy of the North and South in ye South morally impossible to answer any purpose, for Bishop Douglass and I did not agree to unite in one in ye South. Such an agreement in ye supposition of other establishments in ye North would cause nearly, if not entirely so, a total alienation of ye Clergy of Douay College in ye North, of whom I believe I have more than there are in all ye rest of England. . . . I need not tell you what the Council of Trent says about Seminaries. But it seems if there is not one rule, all will think they have a right to follow their own way in establishments now forming, and where will this end? I sincerely wish to know your sentiments on these matters, as I earnestly wish for union.

"Yours &c.

"WIL. GIBSON."

This letter failed to satisfy Bishop Walmesley. As a regular, he naturally felt hurt at what he considered an ungracious apprehension respecting the works founded by the Jesuits and Benedictines, and he frankly regretted Bishop Gibson's refusal to concentrate at Old Hall. He wrote on January 12, 1796, as follows:—[1]

"My Lord,

". . . As you desire to know my sentiments upon some particular points, I give them here freely and sincerely. I cannot help saying that I am really sorry you did not agree with Bishop Douglass in joining your people with his, to form one College and one Seminary as it was at Douay. Many advantages would attend one such establishment, which cannot be portioned out to two. In the collective body of the secular clergy there would be better choice of Masters; studies would be better carried on, with more emulation and less expense, &c., than by having two separate Colleges. Then I don't see any particular advantage accruing to you by having the College in the North rather than in the South. Your young clergy would be equally taken care of were the establishment settled in the South. You seem to form an objection by not having a College of your own in the North, while there are in that part several other establishments erected. I don't see there any difficulty, provided your clergy be under due care whether here or there. The establishments settled lately in the North can be of no injury, but rather of advantage, as they all tend to the same end, *viz.*, the promoting of the mission by preparing and fitting subjects for carrying on that essential work. The establishment at Stonyhurst, the Monks,[2] Franciscans or any others have for their plan and design the labours of the mission, they are therefore commendable and deserving of encouragement, and an encouragement to them will be the allowing them to enjoy the same rule of government and privileges which they enjoyed under the respective Bishops abroad. . . . In fine, let us three keep good union among ourselves, and help one another by our mutual prayers, which on my part I don't fail to do, and am, &c.

"C. Walmesley."

[1] *Clifton Archives*, vol. ix.

[2] *I.e.*, the Benedictines.

CHAPTER XXV.

THE CONVENTS ESTABLISHED IN ENGLAND.

1794-1795.

In order to complete our account of the effect of the French Revolution on English Catholics, a short space must now be devoted to a description of the reception experienced by the nuns when they arrived in their own country, which most of them had not seen for a long period, some almost for the space of a lifetime.

Convents had been almost unknown in England for over two centuries. They were commonly looked upon as among the most extreme abuses of "Popery". The most extraordinary stories of walled-up nuns, or girls forced into the convents against their will, or kept there by physical force or by the artifice of the superioress, or the like, found unquestioned credence. It is therefore a real tribute to English sense of justice, and sympathy with the oppressed, that when the communities suddenly arrived in large numbers, and in a state of destitution, they were received, if not with open arms, at any rate with sympathetic regard, and were able to live down the worst part of the prejudice against them.

It would not be quite true to say that such prejudice did not show itself at all. The following extract from Bishop Douglass's diary shows that there were a certain number whose minds were exercised by the new development:—

"1796. January. A poem by Dr. Hudson of Oxford (it is said he is the author) against the monks of La Trappe being settled in England by Mr. Weld. Many skitts in the newspapers against the nuns of Amesbury. Francis Eyre Esq. desires Mr. Archer to inform me that he finds the Gentlemen of Oxford talk much against the opening and establishing of

convents, complain of the parade with which Miss Weld was professed at Winchester (in truth there was not any parade on the occasion), but allow that we clergy may have Colleges to educate clergymen, as our religion is tolerated, or even protected, by the law of the land."

Such remarks as these, however, represented only the feelings of a few. Dr. Douglass adds that "The skitts were answered and scouted (in the newspapers) for their illiberality". The King himself was sympathetic. When he was told of the arrival of nuns, he gave orders that their luggage should be allowed to pass through the custom-house unexamined,[1] and the Government allowed them all to share the grants issued by the Treasury to those who were driven from the Continent by the Revolution.

The communities arrived quite destitute. The expression used by one that they reached London "with scarcely a rag to their tail" was no exaggeration. They had lost their convents, and all their possessions with the small exception of such personal belongings as they had been able to carry away with them; and they had little hope of ever recovering anything. In some cases they had actually arranged for the sale of their convents before coming away, though the price they agreed to accept was ridiculously small, and small as it was, was probably never paid. Such funds as they had invested in French securities were all gone, and it was only with the greatest difficulty, in some cases by selling their belongings, that they could raise enough money for their journey to England. It is no small credit to the Catholic body that all the communities were provided within a few months of their arrival with respectable, and even comparatively comfortable accommodation. In some cases the relatives of the nuns came to their assistance; in two or three instances, Bishop Douglass himself succeeded in providing for them; one community owed their new convent to the Marquis of Buckingham; but the greater part of the burden fell upon the representatives of the old Catholic families. The perusal of the list given below will be in itself a sufficient answer to those who have accused them of want of sympathy towards the poor destitute nuns.

[1] See *Faithful unto Death*, by J. M. Stone, p. 254.

In one respect, characteristic of England, the new foundations differed from the old—they were no longer in towns, but in the different country seats, where for contemplative Orders, the quiet and seclusion of their surroundings was an unmixed advantage. The nuns settled down quietly, by force of circumstances, and as years rolled on, they found less and less reason to think of returning to their Continental homes. Only one community ever went back—the Augustinian Canonesses of Bruges. They had to re-purchase their convent, where they are still living at the present day. The others remained in England, and after the early trials and days of extreme poverty were over, they found the consolation of being in their native land outweigh the advantages even of a Catholic country abroad.

All the communities had to look back on days of hardship and trial during the time of transition, and on periods of anxiety as to their future. The troubles which befel them on the Continent, and drove them from their homes, endeared by long and sacred memories, have already been alluded to: it remains now to describe in brief their arrival in England, and the manner in which friends came forward to help them, and to find them new homes.[1]

The first nuns to arrive were the Benedictines of Ghent. They came from Antwerp in two parties. The first embarked on June 24, and, after a prosperous voyage, landed safely in London two days later. Bishop Douglass enters their arrival in the following words:—

"1794. Mrs. Hesketh, of Brockholes, the Procuratrix of Ghent, with eight of her nuns, and four young ladies arrived in London June 26th in the evening, under the care of —— Diccon-son Esq. of Wrightlington. They all lodged in Mrs. Booker's in Bond Street, and mean to go down to Lancashire."

The other party followed after a few days, coming by a vessel to Dover, from whence they drove to London. Mr. Dicconson, who had gone to Belgium specially to fetch them, continued to take charge of the party, and a few days later they set out under his care for the North. They were all dressed

[1]The dates of the arrival of each community respectively are given from the Diary of Dr. Douglass. They differ in some instances by a day or two from those given by Milner in the Catholic Directories for 1795 and 1796.

in secular attire, which in some cases seems to have had a strange appearance in those who were so unused to it. The very idea of nuns being actually in England was so novel that all kinds of precautions were deemed necessary to prevent their recognition. They were strictly forbidden to carry their Breviaries, or any books that might be mistaken for Breviaries, and of course nothing in the nature of a rosary or scapular &c. was to be seen. Even so, their appearance caused some attention, and led to inquiries which were at times disquieting to the nuns.[1]

A few days later, on Sunday, July 6, the Benedictines from Brussels, who had also had a favourable passage, arrived at St. Catharine's Docks. Close after them, the same day, came the Carmelites from Lierre. On July 12, two communities arrived in the same ship—the Carmelites from Antwerp, and the Augustinianesses from Bruges. The following day again the Carmelites from Hoogstraat reached London, followed on the 17th by the Brussels Dominicanesses, and the Canonesses of Louvain. Lastly, during the month of August, the Franciscans from Princenhof, Bruges, and the Sepulchrines from Liège, who had been less fortunate in their voyage, at length arrived. They had both been delayed in leaving Rotterdam by contrary winds, and their non-arrival gave rise to considerable anxiety among their friends, as owing to the success of the French arms, the condition of the North Sea was becoming daily more dangerous, from the presence of French battleships. When they eventually arrived, they had a long tale to tell of dangers and accidents survived, and hardships endured. The account written by the Procuratrix of the Liège community describing their departure from their convent has already been given. The same MS. gives a full description of the journey, and is worth quoting in full as illustrating the suffering which the religious had to face in taking a long voyage in days when navigation involved much uncertainty and hardship:—[2]

"What with getting our clothes, and getting in our provisions, which consisted of Hams, poultry, sea-biscuits, Tea and sugar, we did not leave Rotterdam till the 29th of July, about 4 in the afternoon, and arrived at Briel the next morning at

[1] See Diary of Bishop Douglass, January, 1796.
[2] *History of the New Hall Community*, p. 107.

7 o'clock; but the wind being contrary, we determined to return and go to Helvoetsluys. We set out; but the Pilot drove the vessel into the sands on the 31st, where we stuck, and only got out with the tide next day. To add to our fears, he told us that his father had perished just in that very place where our vessel lay, and so left us. There was a large American vessel riding at anchor near us. One night, the wind being very high, their Anchor gave way, and the two vessels knocked against each other. The rigging was damaged; but the vessel stood. Their Captain seeing Mr. Clifton[1] on our deck, probably took him for our Captain. He swore famously at him, and wished his head had been between the ships to break the blow.

"We arrived at Helvoetsluys on the 2nd of August, and cast Anchor at a little distance from the town. The wind being against us, we could not put to sea. The town was so full of people that provisions were both very scarce and extravagantly dear. We had only provided sufficient for 10 days expecting to be in London in half that time. We suffered very much for want of bread, as the brown biscuits disagreed with several of the nuns.

"One night while we lay at Anchor, a Collier's vessel fell foul of ours, and broke the cable in two. A day or two after the Captain was determined to try to put to sea, tho' the wind was not very favourable. Accordingly we set out, but found the wind against us, and the Captain of an English Man of war sent after us to let us know that it was dangerous for us to go without a Convoy, as there had been some ships lately taken by the French. We therefore returned and put ourselves under the direction of the Convoy, which only waited for a fair wind in order to set sail. On the 12th at noon they sent word that they were going to set out, though the wind was not very favourable, and our Captain seemed to fear we should be obliged to return. We were in all 7 Ships, *viz.* 4 Ships of War, the packet boat, and one Merchant Vessel. As soon as we got to sea, we cast anchor—our Pilot judged it to be in a very dangerous place, particularly as the wind was very high. Here we lay all night, which indeed was a very blustering one, and tho' we had been very much tossed with high winds and bad

[1] Rev. F. Clifton, the chaplain of the community.

wet weather during the time we lay at Helvoetsluys, and were most of us very sea-sick, yet this last exceeded all the rest, and in the morning the Pilot and Captain seemed to think it very uncertain whether we should be able to put to sea or not. On the 13th, between 9 and 10 o'clock we saw the other ships hoisting their sails and making preparations, but the wind was not yet favourable, and we much feared the being obliged to return into the Port. However, to our great satisfaction, the Convoy put to sea, and the wind changed in our favour. This we attributed to the intercession of St. Francis Xaverius, for 3 of our lay sisters got up very early that morning and dipped a relic of this great saint into the sea, and said a prayer in his honour with great confidence, earnestly petitioning him to obtain us a fair wind.

"As soon as we got into open sea, our Dutch Pilot left us. The next day we lost sight of all the ships of war, but the merchant ship that set out with us was still in sight, and the Captain took it for his Pilot, as he had not been accustomed to this part of the sea, nor to direct the vessel himself. This was the 14th, the eve of the Assumption. We had nothing on board but Ham and chickens, so that we were obliged to eat meat. The water was so bad it was impossible to drink it, and I don't know what we should have done the greatest part of our voyage on the water, had we not brought from Liège a large provision of country wine, which we drank with water.

"The following day, the Assumption, we saw land, and therefore Reverend Mother desired us to put on our secular clothes. It was remarkable that upon our Lord's Ascension we left our convent, and upon our Lady's Assumption we were obliged to put off our religious Habits. That morning the Merchant ship we had taken for our Pilot stuck in the sands in a very dangerous position. During the day we heard very loud Cannon for several hours, and several of us were a good deal alarmed, supposing it to be some engagement with the French.

"On the 16th, at 3 o'clock in the morning we got to Gravesend. The Captain was very anxious to get a Pilot to conduct us up the river that evening, as he himself had never taken his vessel further than Gravesend. He put out his flag, and let off one of his Cannons, for this purpose, but no one

came. At last he called to a fishing boat and asked if they had any one who could steer his vessel, and how much they would ask to go to London. They answered twelve Guineas. Upon hearing this extravagant demand, the Captain wished them Good Night. Some time before this we met some fishing boats, and bought of them a large quantity of small flat fish, which we eat boiled without any bread, but we all agreed we had not for a long time relished anything so much. They gave us also a barrel of fish. . . . [Early next morning] we sent out the boat, and got some bread and butter, so we had a very good breakfast.

"About 4 o'clock in the afternoon we arrived at Woolwich. Just at the entrance of the Thames our vessel ran foul of a Man-of-war. Several of us who were upon deck and saw with what violence the two ships approached each other, gave themselves up for lost. The Captain wrung his hands and appeared almost in despair, but Providence saved us by means of a small boat which was fastened at the side of the ship, which was crushed to pieces, but broke the blow and we only felt a slight shock. Had it not been for this poor boat, both ships would infallibly instantly have sunk. To increase the gloom of the prospect, we were actually in sight of two vessels which had foundered from a similar accident, and whose masts appeared above water.

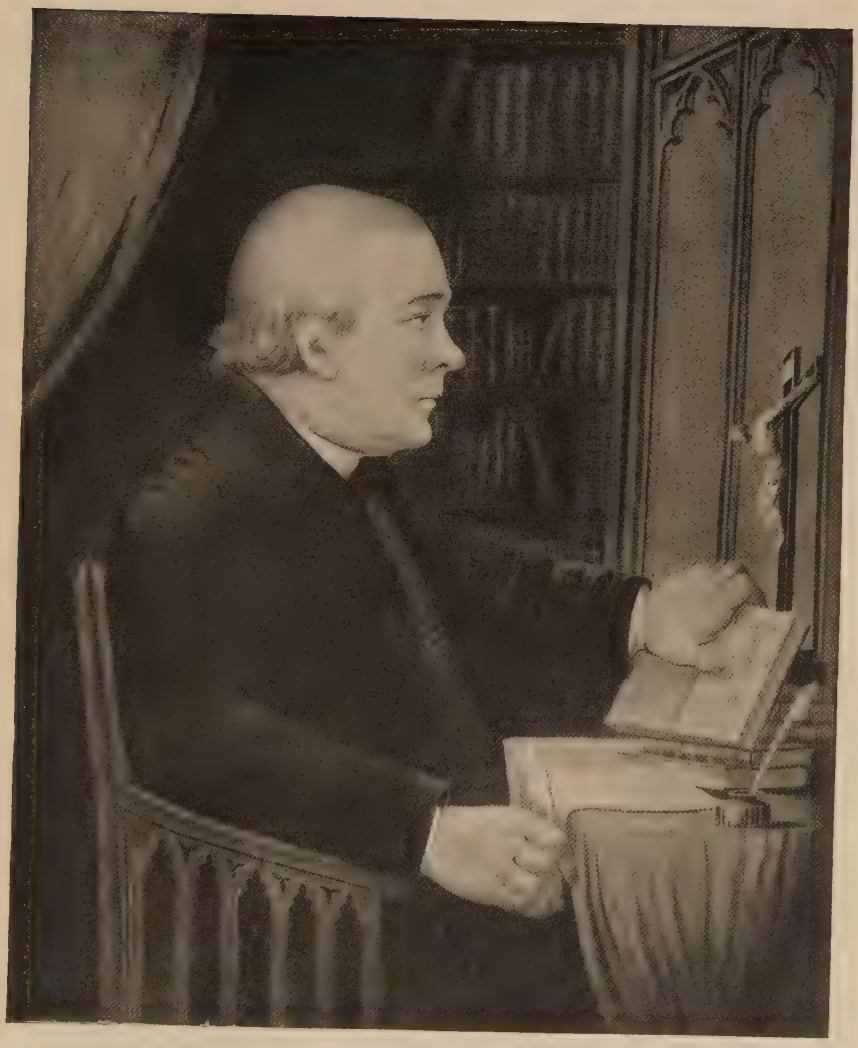
"Mr. Clifton got out here and took a post-chaise to London, in order to get carriages for us that evening to go up to town if possible. We had proposed landing in London, but the Captain foreseeing many difficulties which might attend our doing so, prevailed with us to land at Greenwich. Having already met with so many accidents going up to the river, we were in continual alarms. Just before we entered Greenwich, we got a Pilot. We arrived there about 6 o'clock and cast anchor opposite the great Hospital. Mr. Clifton found it impossible for us to get into town that night, but he bespoke carriages for 1 o'clock next morning. Our friends wished us to go very early, that we might get into London as privately as possible, the populace seeming much disposed for riots. That very night there was a mob at Charing Cross, who pillaged or broke the windows of two or three of the houses. Mr. Clifton returned with Mr. Wright's man about 10 o'clock

at night. They informed us that Mr. Talbot and Mr. Wright not having succeeded in getting a house large enough to contain us all, they had settled that several of us should go to our friends in London, who were expecting us—for tho' they had taken two houses, yet as the expense of keeping both would be very great, they wished us to give up one. We were to pay 9 guineas a week for the two. The thought of being separated afflicted us all very much. We were willing to undergo any inconvenience rather than consent to this, and therefore we determined all of us to go to the house in Old Burlington Street, which had been taken for us, and was larger than that in Dover Street. The Captain desired us to leave our two servants, and two or three lay sisters on board, till our goods were all delivered safe, which was done accordingly.

"At 1 o'clock next morning Mr. Talbot's man and two of Mr. Wright's came to fetch us. They had ordered breakfast for us at Greenwich, where carriages were waiting for us. Though it was so very early when we landed, yet there were several persons about, who seeing so many dressed in black, enquired if there had not been a burial.

"We had two of the long Greenwich coaches called Caterpillars, two common coaches and a post-chaise. It was so early when we arrived at Charing Cross that the Hackney Coaches were not come out, and the Greenwich coaches would not take us any further, so that we were obliged to wait there near half an hour. We found everything ready for us in Burlington Street when we arrived. Mr. Wright had laid in a small provision of all that was necessary for us, both there and in Dover Street. He had taken the houses as we desired ten days or a fortnight before, and had been in daily expectation of our arrival. All our friends began to be very uneasy about us, apprehending that we had been taken by the French, or that some accident had happened to our vessel."

It may well be imagined what anxiety came over Dr. Douglass's charitable mind at the continual arrival of these communities in a state of absolute destitution. The matter was urgent: it was necessary to find them lodgings and means of subsistence to save them from actual want. He took two communities under his own personal protection. One of these was that of the Benedictines from Brussels, who were



Rev. John Milner (*aetat c.* 45).

among the first to arrive. They landed at St. Catharine's Docks as we have seen on Sunday, July 6, and lodged in a house in Caroline Street, Bedford Square, till arrangements could be made for their future. Here Bishop Douglass visited them, and he entrusted their spiritual care temporarily to Rev. T. Rigby, of Lincoln's Inn Fields, while he devoted himself to making permanent provision for them. Allusion has already been made to a house at Winchester, in St. Peter's Street, close to the Catholic Church, which had been bought by Bishop Talbot, and was at that time the property of the Vicar Apostolic of the London District. Formerly it had been let, but for the last year or two it had been empty. At one time a proposition had been made that it should be utilised for the reception of some of the *émigré* clergy; but this course was rendered unnecessary when the King's House was allocated to their use by the Government. Thus the bishop's house was still empty when the nuns arrived. Dr. Douglass proposed that it should be converted into a convent, and Milner at once entered into his scheme. He had certain alterations made in the building, to suit it to its new purpose, one being the construction of a chapel at the top of the house, with a lantern roof. The expense of this, and such little furniture as was necessary for the reception of the nuns, was borne by a few friends belonging to the old Catholic families and others, of whom in their annals they enumerate the names of Stourton, Clifford, Weld, Tichborne, Tancred, Witham, Lawson, Stapleton and the Duke of Marlborough, etc.

The nuns did not wait for the alterations to be finished, but the first four took the coach and arrived at Winchester on Monday, July 14. The others followed the same week, and thus within a month of their having to leave Brussels, they had resumed their ordinary life in England, under circumstances which would have seemed beyond their highest hopes. They kept their full religious rule in all things except the wearing of their habits. These for a time they only wore in the morning, when no one was likely to see them, and in the afternoon they changed into a secular dress. Dr. Milner interested himself on their behalf with his wonted vigour. By his advice they opened a school, so as to secure the means of subsistence. He made the prioress take the Oath of Allegiance,

etc., prescribed in the Act of 1791, so as to avoid molestation. By means of his wide influence, he soon succeeded in obtaining for them a certain number of pupils, which number increased as time went on.

The other community whom Dr. Douglass took under his personal protection was that of the Canonesses of Louvain, to whom he offered the convent at Hammersmith. There were only five nuns left belonging to the Institute of Mary, and their school had been closed. Bishop Douglass naturally thought that this would be a good opportunity to give new life to the place, and he offered the "Young Ladies' School," as it was still popularly called, to the Louvain community, on condition that they would allow the surviving nuns of the Institute to end their days in the convent. The offer was accepted, and the Louvain nuns, who had landed at Greenwich, re-embarked in barges, and proceeded up the Thames to Hammersmith.

They did not, however, find all that they wanted in their new home. The house was not large enough, and was in several ways inconvenient. The following letter from Sister Stanislaus Haydock to her brother George, who was about to return to St. Edmund's College, shows that from the first the nuns did not seem likely to settle down at Hammersmith.

"We are here" (she writes) "very different indeed to what we were at Louvain. We are obliged to be three or four in a room, very much pinched for place, and many other inconveniences. However, we must resign ourselves to the will of God. It is the greatest cross He could have sent us, excepting being under the French. . . . Mrs. Pendrill, Mrs. Dillon, Mrs. Woods, and Mrs. Taylor[1] desire their compliments to you, and would be very glad to see you. . . . At Hammersmith we wear our habit, and keep our order as well as circumstances will permit, tho' not quite as we have been accustomed to at dear Louvain. We don't rise at midnight, but at five o'clock in the morning, which I find much harder, as you know, I always loved my bed, and do so still. . . . I thought perhaps you might have some thoughts of coming to see us, as tho' I do assure you it would be a true and sincere pleasure to me,

[1] Four of the five survivors of the Institute of Mary. The fifth, Mrs. Apollonia Santo, left the convent and lived alone in London.

yet I do not wish it at present, because I could have very little enjoyment of you: it is not now with us as it was at Louvain. There we could entertain our friends comfortable with lodging and board, but not so now."

Within a few months after this the community had left, and settled at Amesbury, in Wiltshire, where they took a house built on part of an old Benedictine convent.[1]

The remaining communities all succeeded in finding benefactors to receive them and provide them with a new home. Chief among these was Lord Arundell of Wardour, who offered his seat at Lanherne, in Cornwall, for the use of one of the exiled communities. The Carmelites from Antwerp accepted the offer, and their community has continued at Lanherne to the present day. Mr. Berkeley of Spetchley in similar manner offered his seat at Hartpury Court, in Gloucestershire, to the Dominicanesses of Brussels.[2] Sir John Lawson received the Carmelites of Lierre at Auckland St. Helen's, near Durham. The Augustinianesses of Bruges went to Essex, where Sir Thomas Gage offered them his seat called Hengrave Hall. The Hoogstraat Carmelites found a friend in Charles Butler, who put himself to great trouble in their regard. The community numbered fifteen. On their arrival, he received the majority into his own house in Red Lion Square, and provided for the others among his friends. He then hired a house at Acton, known as Fryer's Place, where the whole community were reunited, and which served as a temporary convent; but before the end of the year, he had made arrangements with Sir John Webbe for them to move into a large house belonging to him at Canford in Dorsetshire.[3] Mr. Weld received the Franciscans of Princenhof, Bruges, and placed them at Winchester, in a house on the site of the old abbey. Two of his daughters had come over with the community, one a schoolgirl, the other a novice; and the profession of the latter in 1795 was probably the first instance of solemn vows being taken by a nun in England since the Reformation.

[1] This community is now at Newton Abbot, in Devonshire.

[2] This community is now at Carisbrooke, in the Isle of Wight.

[3] It will be remembered that a sister of Bishop Douglass was a member of this community. They are now settled at Chichester, where they have been since the year 1870.

The Liège nuns found their first benefactor in London, where Lord Clifford offered them his house in Bruton Street. They moved into it at the end of August, the expense of purchasing such things as were necessary for their daily life being borne by Sir William Gerard. There was a chapel at the top of the house, at which several Masses were said daily by *émigré* clergy, and the nuns were able to carry out all their usual spiritual exercises; but it is interesting to learn that although they assembled in choir for their office, each one had to say it privately, lest the sound of the recitation should be heard outside, and attract observation.

Although the chapel was a great convenience to them, however, in other ways the house was not suitable, for it was far too small, and the community could not fit in without in some cases eight or ten to a room, with many of the mattresses on the floor. After a few weeks, they left London, and went down to Yorkshire, where Lord Stourton had offered them a large residence near Market Weighton, called Holme Hall, containing a small chapel built only a few years before by Lord Langdale.[1] Having despatched their belongings by sea to Hull, the first party of nuns, six in number, set out by the mail coach to York on October 21, at six in the morning, arriving there at nine the following evening. They were received with great cordiality at the Bar Convent, where they were enabled to rest half a day before setting out for Holme. They did not however remain long in their new quarters, which turned out to be too small for them, and two years later we find them at Dean House, near Salisbury, under Bishop Walmesley's jurisdiction. He insisted on their wearing their habits, and a dispute followed between him and Mgr. Erskine on the matter. Mgr. Erskine claimed that Rome had given him special faculties to look after the convents in England, and considering that it was unwise for nuns to allow themselves to be seen in their habits, he had given them a dispensation. Bishop Walmesley refused to recognise his faculties, and after some correspondence, Mgr. Erskine, while adhering to his claim with respect to his faculties, withdrew his requisition in deference to Bishop Walmesley's wishes. In the year 1799 the community moved to New Hall in Essex, where they have been ever since.

[1] He died in 1777, when the title became extinct.

During the summer and autumn of 1794, the same events which had driven the nuns from the Netherlands to England, also caused a second stream of French priests to land on our shores. Some of them had been in England before and had passed from thence to Holland; others had taken refuge there in the first instance; and now the success of the French arms in that country forced them to seek a new asylum. During the month of July, 1794, eighty French priests arrived: before the end of September 400 more had come. After that they arrived in such numbers that the committee for the relief of the emigrants had to give notice that no further grants would be given to any who should arrive after the month of November, 1794. This proclamation of course did not affect the nuns who had already arrived, for whom the annual allowance of £10 per head, small as it was, was a welcome addition to their resources. It did, however, afterwards affect the communities who at this time were still in France, and did not reach England till the following year, and who were consequently deprived of that source of aid.

Nevertheless, the King continued to act in a generous manner towards the unfortunate refugees. Witness of this is borne in the Catholic Directory for 1796, where in addition to the former instances, the following is given:—

"In 1795, after the invasion of Holland by the Republicans, the English Government having learnt that a considerable number of French ecclesiastics, including several prelates, with other emigrants of the same nation, were equally exposed to the danger of perishing by the sword of their insatiate enemies, or by hunger, cold and want of every kind, directed a number of armed vessels to hover round the coasts of the United Provinces in order to save as many as possible of these unhappy sufferers. In fact a very considerable number of them were by this means rescued from destruction and brought to England, where they experience the same humane treatment which so many of their countrymen had before tasted."

Those who came over with the second stream were again to be counted by hundreds, and by the end of the following year, De Lubersac calculates that there were 8,000 French priests in England.

During all this time the communities in France had been

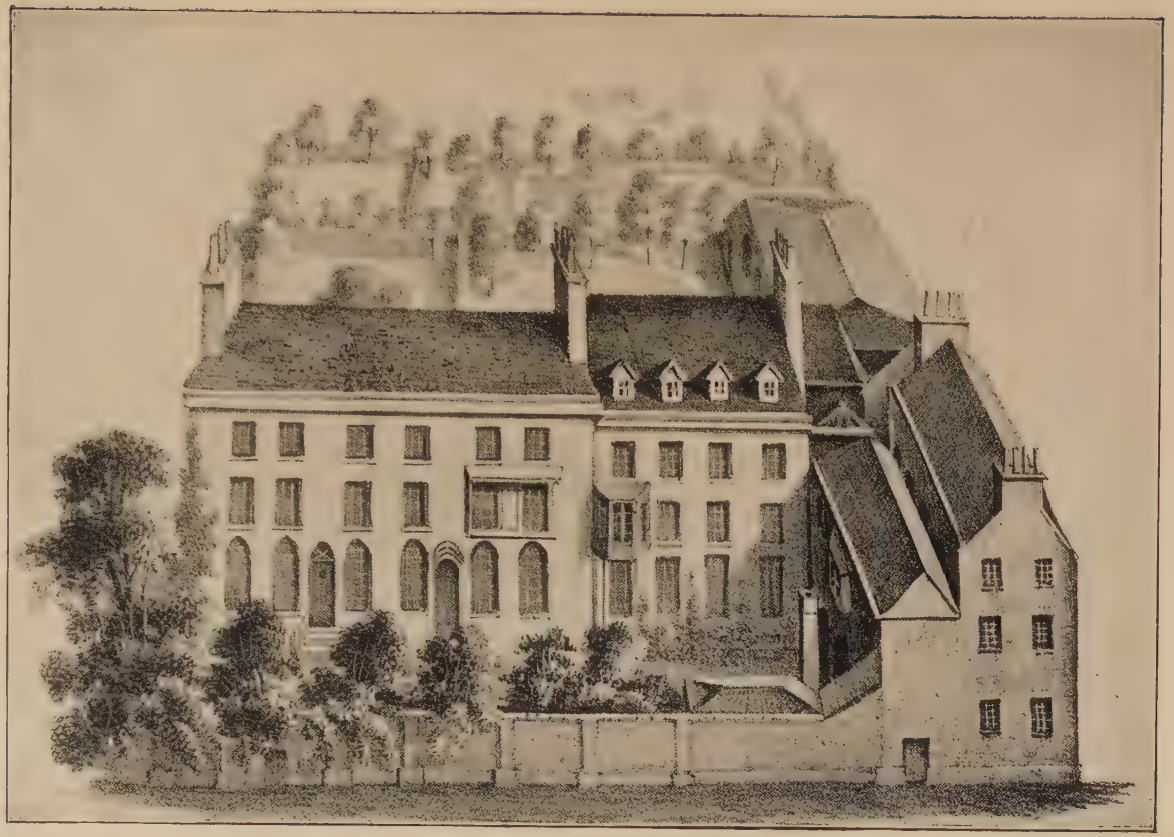
kept, as we have seen, in close confinement, and it was not until the year 1795 that they regained their liberty. The collegians of Douay and St. Omer reached England early in March: the nuns did not begin to arrive until two months later. The three communities who had been imprisoned at Dunkirk were the first to reach London, on May 3, and they were followed the next day by the Cambray nuns. Two months later the Paris Benedictines arrived, and the Poor Clares from Rouen reached London in the early days of September. This completed the emigration for the time. The "Blue Nuns" tried to re-establish themselves in Paris, and did not come to England till several years later, when they were received at Cossey by Sir William Jerningham, with whose family they had long been closely connected; while the Augustinianesses of Neuilly succeeded in re-establishing themselves after the Revolution and re-opened their school.

Dr. Douglass now made another attempt to revive the Hammersmith Convent, this time with success. He offered it on the same conditions as before to the Benedictines of Dunkirk, who joyfully accepted his offer. There were by this time only three survivors of the old Institute living there, one having recently died. These three became Benedictine "Oblates," and all three ended their lives in the convent. The Benedictine nuns were well satisfied with their new quarters, and remained at Hammersmith many years, during which their community reached a thriving condition. They re-opened the school, which they also conducted with great success.[1]

The other communities who arrived from France were also provided for. The Cambray nuns throughout their history had been under the Anglo-Benedictine Congregation, and the monks now provided them with an asylum. By invitation of Rev. J. B. Brewer, O.S.B., they went to Woolton, near Liverpool, where they opened a school.[2] The Poor Clares of Dunkirk were received by Mr. Berkeley of Spetchley, who gave them a house at Church Hill near Worcester. Their sisters of Gravelines, the mother house of the English Poor Clares, founded by Mary Ward, were received by the Marchioness of

[1] In 1862 this community migrated to Teignmouth in Devonshire, where they have been ever since.

[2] This community is now at Stanbrook, near Worcester.



THE CONVENT AT HAMMERSMITH.

Buckingham, who had already shown such devotion to the cause of the poor sufferers by the French Revolution. Her Protestant chaplain visited the nuns on their arrival in London, and did much to conduce to their comfort. Finally, Gosfield Hall in Essex was handed over to their use, where they remained for many years.[1]

The last community to arrive was that of the Poor Clares of Rouen. Their coming is thus chronicled by Bishop Douglass :—

"The Poor Clares from Rouen arrived in London in four different companies. 1°. four, who go down to York to see the house at Weldrake. Mr. Thompson, the proprietor, refuses to let that house. 2°. three. 3°. twenty-two. 4°. the remainder. They are lodged at Somerset Street, no. 17, Manchester Square. Messrs. Earle and Smith serve them as confessors."

The community were eventually received by Sir Carnaby Haggerston at Haggerston Castle, in Northumberland. On their way down they also were received by the community at the York convent, as their sisters from Lierre had been before them. This is described in their annals as follows :—[2]

"[They] remained in London, in the furnished house they rented in Somerset Street, about four months, during which time they were kindly assisted by several of the Catholic gentry, amongst the rest being Lord Fauconberg (*sic*), who had a sister in the community. . . . After trying in vain to meet with a more suitable situation, Sir Carnaby Haggerston, moved with compassion, offered them the use of his Castle in Northumberland during his own lifetime. Accordingly as soon as possible they set off. Six every day in the public coaches passed through York, where they stayed one night with the nuns at the Bar Convent, who were extremely kind. The community all met together in their new home on Christmas eve, 1795."

[1] They eventually united with other communities at Darlington.
[2] *St. Mary's Convent, York*, p. 243.

CHAPTER XXVI.

BISHOP BERINGTON AND PROPAGANDA.

1795-1797.

DURING the first half of the year 1795, a new situation was created in Catholic affairs by the death of Bishop Thomas Talbot, which took place with some suddenness on Friday, April 24. He had been in failing health for some time past, and in order to seek a remedy, he repaired, in company with his coadjutor, Dr. Berington, to Hotwells, outside Bristol, on April 14. For a time he seemed to benefit by taking the waters; but on the evening of the 23rd, during dinner, he was seized with an apoplectic fit, and died the following day without having recovered consciousness. He was buried in the vault under the new church in Trenchard Street, which had been opened five years before.[1] It was a strange coincidence which brought it about that the Requiem was celebrated by Rev. Robert Plowden, who absolutely refused to allow Bishop Berington to officiate in his church.

That Thomas Talbot was a holy man, filled with meekness and charity and forbearance, no one will deny. In one sense his loss to the Midland District was great, for the example of his life had ever been a source of edification, and he was in close sympathy with his clergy. His influence had always been on the side of peace. Yet he was in some respects even more unfit to govern a diocese in such difficult times than his brother had been. His very love of peace, with its consequent weakness of action, produced as a result a separation between his district and the other three which almost amounted to a

[1] In the year 1906, when preparations were being made to pull down the Trenchard Street church, which has long been replaced by the large church of St. Mary on the Quay, the remains of Bishop Talbot were removed to St. Gregory's Abbey, Downside.

schism. Nevertheless, Thomas Talbot himself was thoroughly loyal to the Church, and while he has been much blamed for tolerating a liberal spirit among his clergy, no one has ever breathed a suspicion against his own personal orthodoxy.

With respect to his coadjutor, Bishop Berington, the same cannot be said. He too was a man of charity, and a lover of peace; but he had allowed himself to be led by others into a position which bordered closely on the limits of orthodoxy. His name indeed stood affixed to several documents published in the *Blue Books* which must be considered to have overstepped that limit. Propaganda had already called upon him to make some kind of satisfaction, and a correspondence was on progress at this very time, when by the death of Bishop Talbot he succeeded as Vicar Apostolic of the Midland District. Here then was a new situation of some complexity. Dr. Berington had ordinary episcopal faculties, and could confirm and ordain; though the latter power was limited by the fact that "extraordinary faculties" were required for ordaining priests for the mission, that is, in technical language, those "*ad titulum missionis*". Thus, in practice, he was only able to ordain regulars; he could not consecrate the Holy Oils, which had consequently to be sent to him every year from one of the other districts; and he was unable to issue dispensations as to the observance of Lent, or in matrimonial or other cases in which the vicars apostolic were accustomed to act. These "extraordinary faculties" Propaganda refused to send until he had re-established his orthodoxy by some kind of retractation.

A long and weary correspondence took place between Berington and Cardinal Gerdil, who had succeeded Antonelli as Prefect of Propaganda, lasting several years, during which time the Midland District was in the anomalous position of being governed by a bishop without full faculties. Nearly all the letters are preserved;[1] but it will be sufficient for our purpose to follow them in outline.

At the beginning an important part was played by Mgr. Erskine. He had always been friendly with Sir John Throckmorton, Lord Petre, and the Cisalpines generally, and through them with Bishop Berington; yet he was sufficiently versed in

[1] *Kirk Papers* (Oscott), vol. ii.

Catholic affairs to see that a retractation of some sort was absolutely necessary. He only wished to make such retractation as easy as circumstances would permit. Bishop Berington was also anxious that matters should be adjusted, for he was very tired of the controversy, and the excitement of it had died down. Nevertheless, he was anxious not to offend his former colleagues, and his respect for them made him unwilling to sign anything which might prejudice their position. He eventually wrote a letter which he considered sufficient, and sent it to Cardinal Gerdil. The original was in Latin, and ran to considerable length. We can give Bishop Berington's own analysis of it, from a letter to a friend, written some months afterwards.

"I was studiously attentive," he writes, "to reach all the sentiments expressed by the Cardinal himself. I declared that I felt the most sincere reverence for the station, and character, of the Sovereign Pontiff, and this was, and is still, the language of my heart. I professed my willingness to submit with due filial obedience to all the dogmatical decisions of the Holy See, for so is what I conceive to be the duty of every true and faithful son of the Catholic Church. I avowed my readiness to retract, and did indeed in that answer retract, any seeds of bad opinions (semina malorum) which I might, in the prosecution of a long controversy, have incautiously dropped or overlooked; for to advance or to countenance purposely and deliberately any opinion which has the most distant tendency to weaken the principles of the Catholic religion, is what I have ever abhorred and do abhor."

Before there was time for an answer to this letter to arrive Bishop Berington was struck with a sudden illness, which for a time caused anxiety. Dr. Douglass enters it in his Diary as follows:—

"1795. On the 18th of October, Bishop Berington gave Confirmation at Blackmore Park, the seat of Thomas Hornyold Esq. On the 20th caught a bad cold; on the 21st rode to Worcester; on approaching the town felt himself so ill that he got off horseback and walked; then it was that he felt a stroke of the palsy which affected his right arm, right cheek and his voice. Dr. Chambers attended him. On the 29th was mending rapidly. Ita Rev. John Kirk, Master of Sedgley Park School, in a letter to me."

Soon after he was convalescent, Cardinal Gerdil's answer arrived, which was favourable, and Bishop Berington did not delay to make this known, with some satisfaction, saying that his "faculties" would soon arrive. His triumph, however, was premature. When Cardinal Gerdil read his letter to the Congregation, the cardinals took a somewhat stricter view and by their request, he wrote a second letter, revoking his former one, and calling upon Bishop Berington for an explicit retractation of his signature to the *Blue Books*. He sent this letter through Mgr. Erskine, together with one for Bishop Douglass, and one for Bishop Walmesley respectively. Mgr. Erskine took it upon himself to suppress all three, and wrote to Cardinal Gerdil begging him to give whatever order he decided on, in the name of the Pope himself, as he doubted whether anything short of this would induce Bishop Berington to make the requisite retractation. This action of Mgr. Erskine afterwards became known, and gave offence to all the parties concerned. The bishops considered that he was taking too much upon himself, Dr. Douglass accusing him of "prying into our character, conduct and affairs". Mgr. Erskine succeeded in explaining his reasons to Dr. Douglass; but his relations with Bishop Berington became permanently strained.

Cardinal Gerdil did as suggested, and obtained the Pope's definite approval to the course taken. The notification of this reached Mgr. Erskine towards the end of February. He accordingly asked Bishop Berington to arrange to meet him, and after some delay—due to a fault in the postal service—a meeting was arranged at Mgr. Erskine's lodgings on April 14, 1796. It would appear that Berington at first showed a disposition to yield; but after consultation with some of his friends on the late Committee, he determined in the opposite sense. The latter took the matter up, appealing to Sir John Mitford to get the Government to bring pressure to bear in Berington's favour, on the plea that he was being made to suffer for adhering to the Protestation and the Oath in the late Act. Both Pitt and the Duke of Portland were approached; but though they both gave civil answers, it was evident that they did not wish to take any steps in the matter. The Duke of Portland indeed sent for Bishop Douglass, and a long interview took place on April 11; but the bishop succeeded in convincing him, and he

decided to let matters take their course. Pitt announced the same decision. One reason given by him was that Mgr. Erskine had no official position, and that they were not formally aware of his presence in the metropolis.

In the meantime Bishop Berington returned home, and drew out a long memorial, which he sent to Rev. Robert Smelt, to be shown to Cardinal Gerdil. This included so full and complete a statement of the position defended by Bishop Berington and the Cisalpines that it deserves a careful study. The following extract contains the essential part of his argument. Beginning by an allusion to his former letter, he says :—

"After so prompt and explicit a compliance with every wish expressed by the Cardinal, I did not expect, I must acknowledge, to be thrown into new perplexities and to have conditions required from me of which his Eminence had not vouchsafed to communicate to me the remotest hint in his first correspondence."

He then continues :—

"By the form of retractation which the Cardinal has now sent me to publish, I am no longer called upon merely to retract seeds of bad opinions which I may have incautiously and without knowing or suspecting their evil tendency concurred with very many other respectable personages in advancing, but am summoned to revoke my signature from the several publications which various incidents and a vexatious opposition during ye transaction of ye public business of ye English Catholics made necessary for their Committee to print. If the important occupations of his Eminence allow him leisure to indulge his native sentiments of equity, and to peruse those publications at full length, and not by partial extracts which may possibly have been submitted to his inspection, he will perceive that they consist of miscellaneous matter, a great part of which is either entirely civil and only relative to ye rights and duties of British subjects, or else a confutation of false charges, a rectifying of misrepresentations and declarations of firm resistance on principles of conscience and duty to exorbitant requisitions made by their opponents. These publications from which I am now required to recall my signature, were not my act alone: they were the joint work of a Committee composed of thirteen persons, whom the Catholic body had appointed to

act in their trust, and on their behalf, and they were printed at different intervals as it became necessary for the Committee to inform their constituents of the state of their concerns under various difficulties which from time to time arose. While the business of their bill was carrying on, several meetings of English Catholics were assembled, and at every meeting their Committee received not only testimonies of regard and gratitude for their exertions and perseverance, but also instructions to proceed according to the outline which had been traced out to them, and which they invariably followed. When the business was at length successfully terminated, and the penal statutes enacted under different reigns against the professors of the Roman Catholic faith were, in consequence of the Committee's steadfastly adhering to the principles solemnly pledged by them in the name of their body, graciously repealed by the legislature of this country, another general meeting took place. The trust to which the Committee had been appointed was expiring, and upon surrendering it they were again honoured with the approbation and thanks of their body, who thus on every occasion and in every stage of the business have avowed and sanctioned the conduct of their delegates.

"Now to revoke, in obedience to ye injunctions of Cardinal Gerdil, my signature from publications made under the urgent circumstances which I have truly described, would be to express a solemn disavowal of the proceedings and asseverations of the Noblemen and Gentlemen with whom I have had the honour and happiness to co-operate in procuring relief to the Roman Catholics of this country. Such a revocation, and enjoined by such authority, would inevitably be construed as an attempt to stigmatise the whole body of Roman Catholics, to annul the declarations made publicly by them to their Governors and fellow-subjects, and to remove those grounds upon which they have after many a struggle obtained, and upon which alone they could ever expect to obtain, their rights as subjects, and the free exercise of their religion.

"If the civil and political principles of Roman Catholics have ceased to be suspected, if the profession of their faith and the frequentation of their worship, instead of being perpetually vilified and often impeded, are now as much authorised as the established religion of the land, if the person, character and

office of the Pope, instead of being a constant object of contempt, derision and execration, are no longer treated with disrespect in this flourishing kingdom, if there be an opening which seems to promise an avowed and cordial correspondence between the King of Great Britain and the Sovereign Pontiff of Rome,—I say it with confidence, because I have manifest truth to support my assertion, that this happy, and in many respects astonishing revolution, is owing, under the blessing of Providence, to the measures pursued by the Catholic Committee, with the approbation and concurrence of the body whom they represented.

"His Eminence is pleased to observe that my revoking my signature to the publications of the Catholic Committee would have the desirable effect of restoring peace to the Catholics of these districts. Heaven forbid that I should ever stand as a bar against concord and union amongst Catholics. The restoration of this blessing among us is devoutly to be prayed for, and it was natural to have expected the return of it in the year 1791, when the Catholic business was finally concluded to the satisfaction of all the parties concerned. By what unfortunate circumstance divisions have been kept alive amongst us, or rather for what sinister purposes attempts have been made to revive them again after they had been dormant for more than three years, though I am convinced they are confined to a few individuals and scarcely affect the body at large, it is not necessary for me to detail: but I am bold to say if his Eminence were himself upon the spot, or amply and correctly informed of things and persons in this country, he would alter his opinion, and form a very different judgment concerning the probable operation of the measure he has proposed to me.

"It would undoubtedly be misbecoming presumption on my part, were I to venture on suggesting any expedient to his Eminence: otherwise I cannot forbear thinking that a few words of paternal exhortation from him addressed to the parties at variance would instantly reconcile all jarring minds, and bury past controversies in oblivion. Certain at least I am, that the proposed retractation, were I to make it public, would produce effects widely different from those happy ones which the laudable zeal of his Eminence for the good of religion in this kingdom prompts him to desire. The Noblemen and

Gentlemen who formed the Catholic Committee, and all they who uniformly co-operated with them, would instantly take the alarm. My conduct, instead of being imitated by others according to the wish expressed by his Eminence, would on the contrary be indignantly resented and publicly condemned. The persons in whose labours I have been associated by the election of the Catholic body, are too conspicuous, and from great intimacy and long experience I am too well acquainted with the delicacy of their feelings and the firmness of their characters ever to expect that they would suffer in silence, much less with apparent approbation, any measures to take place which seemed to impeach, even in the most distant manner, their honour, their integrity, their unshaken attachment to the principles which they have so solemnly and so repeatedly held out to the legislature and their fellow-subjects. Steady Catholics, steady Englishmen, they do indeed love their religion, they venerate its visible head upon earth, they voluntarily submit to privations of honour and emolument for adhering to his communion and respecting his authority in points of faith and discipline; but then they do not undervalue the rights of British subjects, nor set at naught the lately recovered esteem and affections of their countrymen. Yet these they are well aware they must forfeit again if they recede from the pledge which they have publicly given. It is understood in this country that his Holiness has been pleased to express through a certain channel not unknown[1] his thanks to our gracious sovereign for having extended his indulgence to that portion of his subjects who profess the Roman Catholic religion. Would it not then appear unaccountable if in the year 1796 the authority of a Congregation in Rome were brought forward to convey a censure against those principles and measures by which the affections of his Majesty were conciliated in the year 1791, and he was induced to concur with the other two branches of the legislature in relieving his Roman Catholic subjects from oppression."

Mr. Smelt had this memorial translated into Italian, and himself presented it to Cardinal Gerdil about the middle of July. The cardinal appears to have expressed himself satisfied, and said that nothing more would be required from Bishop

[1] An allusion, of course, to the mission of Mgr. Erskine.

Berington. A little later, however, he pointed out that there was still "a small variation" (*una piccola differenza*). As the result of some further correspondence, this was found to centre around one word, the difference being between *continentur* and *contineantur:* Bishop Berington had expressed himself in his first letter as willing to retract any "*semina malorum*"—"seeds of evil"—which *might be* contained in the *Blue Books:* all that he was asked now was to condemn definitely those which *were* contained therein.

The negotiations had been impeded by the threatening state of Rome, but things quietened for a time, and they were re-opened. Cardinal Gerdil drew out a formula for Bishop Berington to sign, and sent it this time to Bishop Douglass, having learnt that the relations with Mgr. Erskine were still strained, on account of the incident of the suppression of the letters. Bishop Douglass sent on the formula to Longbirch. The answer he received was not an encouraging one:— [1]

"LONGBIRCH, *April 9th*, 1797.

"MY LORD,

"I was duly favoured with yours, as likewise with the formula proposed by Cardinal Gerdil, but shall certainly never agree to withdraw my name from the Blue Books and all their contents, and renounce, virtually at least, the Protestation &c. &c. I shall therefore recommence my correspondence with Rome, and things must go on as they have done hitherto. The whole persecution is owing to the manœuvres of Erskine and a few turbulent spirits in this country. You will be so good as to bless the Oils for this District, as you did last year, and I hope Mr. Horrabin will be more expeditious in forwarding them.

"I remain, my Lord, your most obedient humble servant,

"CH: BERINGTON."

Notwithstanding this letter, however, Bishop Berington was seriously considering his position. The following extract from the Diary of Dr. Douglass gives an idea of the influences at work on him:—

[1] *Westminster Archives.*

"1797. April 20. Bishop Berington called on me this day on the business of his signing the formula. He appears to have been moved by a letter Mr. Archer wrote to him, intreating him to sign the formula. As the noblemen and Gentlemen who formed the Committee are parties greatly interested in what he may do in this business, he means to propose the case to them, and take their opinion on the subject.

"I met Lord Petre and Sir John Throckmorton at the house of the former in Park Lane, on the business of Bishop Berington signing the formula. After reasoning much, *viz.*, that the recalling of his signature from the Blue Books, did not imply that he recalled everything in the Blue Books, 'bonum ex integra causa, malum ex quocumque defectu,'[1] many good things in Fénelon's book *Sur les Maximes des Saints*, conduct and example of that Bishop of Cambray &c. &c.—they insisted that Protestants would conclude Bishop Berington had renounced everything in the Blue Books, even civil allegiance; that if he recalled his signature, they would never more be credited by their Protestant friends, nor be able to obtain any further relief from the Legislature, and closed the conversation by begging me to write to Rome to request Cardinal Gerdil to withdraw his requisition and content himself with Bishop Berington's recalling 'pravam qualemcumque noxiam periculosamve doctrinam sive in formula juramenti, sive in libellis qui Turchini[2] dicuntur contentam'. Lord Petre said, 'We wish him to recall all the bad doctrine which Rome condemns'."

At the end of this interview, the prospect of a settlement seemed as far off as ever.

In the meantime various propositions were made for the government of the district. The one which had the support of authority, and appeared likely to be brought about, was that Dr. Milner should be consecrated as coadjutor to Bishop Berington, with the right of succession. Such a proposal indicates an extraordinary want of appreciation of the real state of affairs. The very idea of two men of such opposite dispositions being placed together to govern the district

[1] A well-known theological maxim.

[2] A word in use in mediæval Latin signifying dark blue, a colour supposed to be a favourite one with the Turks (Du Cange).

seems strange enough; but if we add that Dr. Milner would have possessed faculties which his chief did not, and that he undisguisedly looked upon the latter as unorthodox, while at the same time Bishop Berington would have had the confidence and support of almost all the clergy to whom Dr. Milner would have been most unwelcome, we can see a situation which would have been practically an impossible one. The alternative suggestion that Berington should be deposed and be replaced by Dr. Milner had at least the advantage of being practical.

However, a fresh correspondence was opened up with Cardinal Gerdil, some modifications were made in the formula, and at length, in the early autumn, Bishop Douglass, by his personal influence, succeeded in bringing matters to a successful issue. We can again quote his Diary:—

"1797. Sept. 9. Wrote to Bishop Berington extract from Cardinal's letter (all that related to the signing of the formula), and added, 'I pray our Blessed Lord Jesus Christ, under Whom we govern His Church, to direct you to hesitate no longer, but to sign the formula immediately, for your own sake, the interests of His Church, and the glory of His Holy Name.

. . . . . .

"Sept. 30. I wrote a second letter to Bishop Berington, on his not answering my letter, told him the consequences of his refusing to sign the formula, and requested his answer, as I must write to Rome.

"October 4. Received a letter from Bishop Berington: not satisfactory."

As this letter indicates the lines on which a settlement was ultimately arrived at, we will give it in full:— [1]

"LONGBIRCH, *October* 2, 1797.

"MY LORD,

"You will think me very dilatory in returning an answer to your Lordship's letter, which enclosed the formula received from Cardinal Gerdil for my submission; but a multiplicity of business and other avocations have hitherto intervened so as to prevent my attending to ye business, which I freely acknowledge is become peculiarly disgusting to me,

[1] *Westminster Archives.*

both on account of the manner and matter of that odious controversy. I have, however, at last drawn up a preliminary to the formula which to the best of my remembrance limits it to the precise sense which you yourself assured me was the only sense affixed to it by the Sacred Congregation. And indeed it is impossible for me, or any other British subject, to sign the aforesaid formula in any other sense with safety to his civil allegiance, honour, integrity and principles. The preliminary addressed to Cardinal Gerdil must therefore constitute an integral part of ye formula, if your Lordship will consent to grant me the extraordinary powers in quality of Protonotarius Apostolicus.

"I am convinced that such conduct on your part would put a final period to this most tedious business. I am well persuaded that I have done everything on my part which the most rigid orthodoxy can possibly require, and if Rome, or rather the faction here, is not yet satisfied it will be no difficult matter for me to convince the public at large yt no condescension consistent with honour and principle have been wanting on my part in order to restore peace and harmony amongst us.

"Inclosed I send your Lordship the preliminary and formula which I am ready to sign if it will answer the end proposed of procuring from you the extraordinary faculties. If your Lordship should not think yourself authorised to admit me on these terms, you are free to take a copy of it and send it to the Cardinal, but must request the favour yt you will return the original back to me. Be pleased to favour me with an answer as soon as convenient.

"C. BERINGTON."

Bishop Douglass replied as follows :—[1]

"8 *Oct.* 1797.

"MY LORD,

"Not thinking myself authorised to admit a formula signed with many expressed salvoes, when the same was required to be signed *pure et simpliciter*, I having taken the

[1] *Westminster Archives.*

part you permitted and sent it off to Mr. Smelt, intending to send a second to the Cardinal in a week, more or less.

"For I set off this evening to see Bishop Gibson, who is arrived at Mawley[1] on his way to Bath, being in a very bad state of health. If his health and spirits allow him to pay you a visit, at Longbirch, I will presume on your goodness, and call upon you with him. For I wish much to persuade you to content yourself with the preliminary letter to his Eminence, and to omit all expressly mentioned salvoes. . . . I have desired Mr. Horrabin to inclose the original formula to you in this letter, and remain with every good wish, my Lord,

"Your &c.

"J. DOUGLASS."

The sequel can be told in the words of the Rev. John Kirk, who had recently resigned the presidentship of Sedgley Park in order to become the private secretary to Bishop Berington, though he had not yet actually changed his residence. He writes a memorandum as follows:—[2]

"In consequence of the above letter, Mr. Berington said to me yt he would have some one present when they came, and told me he would let me know if he had notice of their coming, and if he could not have Dr. Bew. Fortunately, Dr. Bew came to Longbirch unexpectedly on the evening of the 10th of October. On my return to the Park that evening, I met Bishop Douglass on his road to Longbirch. Having informed Mr. Berington that Mr. Gibson was at the Swan Inn,[3] and unable to come over, Mr. Berington agreed to meet them at the Swan next morning. Dr. Douglass returned that night. In the morning Mr. Berington and Dr. Bew went to the Swan. Mr. Gibson was very ill, but talked much. Mr. Berington, out of compassion to him, did not oppose him much, but said that he never would sign the formula *pure et simpliciter*. However, Dr. Bew told me afterwards he was determined they would not separate till some form had been signed that would satisfy the two Bishops, and finally settle the business. With that view he

[1] The seat of Sir Walter Blount, in Shropshire. The chaplain was Rev. R. Gibson, nephew to the bishop.

[2] *Kirk Papers* (Oscott), vol. ii. [3] At Wolverhampton.

drew up the following preamble, to precede the formula, and to be added to his letter to Cardinal Gerdil. Bishop Gibson would have these words added, 'sive in libellis Turchinis'. With this addition it was deemed satisfactory, and Mr. Berington signed it. At the dissolution of the meeting, Bishops Douglass and Gibson returned to Mawley, and Mr. Berington came up to the Park, and gave us an account of the meeting. He regretted much that he had signed it before Mr. Douglass had given him the extraordinary powers, but added that he was persuaded to sign it, not by the Bishops, but by Dr. Bew."

The meaning of the regret expressed at the end of the above is that Bishop Douglass considered that as the formula had not been signed as it stood, but only with the addition of a preamble,[1] he had no power to accept it, or to grant Bishop Berington his faculties. The latter expressed his conviction that Rome would require something further before giving them —either that he should resign his vicariate, or that he should admonish Mr. Wilkes and require him also to retract, or something similar. In the event, owing to various reasons, some months passed away before the faculties were sent; but Cardinal Gerdil accepted the retractation as signed. And the petition of the clergy in Berington's favour, which had been set on foot by Dr. Bew and others a few days before, was dropped as being no longer necessary.

The following is the full text of the formula as signed, the first paragraph being Bishop Berington's addition:—

"Ne forte jura Regiae majestatis abnuere videar, non incommodum ducit Eminentia Vestra [ut] haec verba 'salva fidelitate' formulae subjiciam, quibus verbis jura civilia atque politica ab iis quae ad fidem et doctrinam pertinent, sive in forma juramenti, sive in libellis Turchinis secernuntur. Hanc igitur conditionem lubenti animo amplector, quatenus per hanc clausulam intacta manent quaecumque in libris praedictis Regni jura res civiles seu politicas et temporales respiciunt.

"Ego, Carolus Berington, ad normam declarationis mihi per sacram Congregationem probante Summo Pontifice praescriptae, ad Sacram Congregationem perferendae pro reprobatione formulae juramenti a Sacra Congregatione reprobatae,

[1] Milner, in stating that the retractation was signed by Bishop Berington, gives it *without* the preamble (*Sup. Mem.*, p. 96).

una cum libellis qui vulgo *Turchini* dicuntur, atque adeo pravae qualiscunque noxiae periculosaeve doctrinae in illis sive in formula, sive in libellis contentae, praesenti hoc meo scripto declaro me revocare, revocatamque haberi velle subscriptionem praedictis scriptis et libellis a me appositam. Profiteorque me Apostolicae Sedis judicio libenti vereque sincero animo submittere, et quae hactenus ex ea prodierunt quaeque in posterum prodibunt dogmaticas decisiones amplecti et amplexurum esse.

"CAROLUS BERINGTON.

"W'HAMPTON, *die* 13 *Octobris*, 1797.

"Testibus { JOANNI CENTURIENSI. / GULIELMO ACANTHENSE."

CHAPTER XXVII.

REVIVAL OF CONTROVERSIES.

1797-1798.

ONE result of the correspondence between Bishop Berington and Propaganda was to re-open the old controversies which had lain dormant for over five years. If Bishop Berington had been ordered to retract his signature from the *Blue Books*, it was a natural deduction that Rev. Joseph Wilkes ought to do the same. In this the three vicars apostolic were agreed. Bishop Walmesley went further, and considered that the laymen who had signed the "Protest and Appeal" ought also to be required to withdraw their signatures. It would appear that these considerations set in motion another train of thoughts in his mind, and he reproached himself for his inaction during the last few years. He thought that those whose names appeared affixed to the celebrated Appendix IX. in the *Third Blue Book* ought to be commanded to make a public retractation, and the Staffordshire Clergy ought to make some kind of satisfaction for their "Appeal to the Catholics of England".

We will leave the consideration of Mr. Wilkes's case till a little later, for it was complicated by the fact that as a Benedictine he had his own superiors, who were not subject to the bishops, except indirectly in affairs connected with the mission. His case therefore did not come on for discussion until the Benedictine Chapter assembled in July, 1798.

With respect to Appendix IX. of the *Third Blue Book*, it will be convenient here to repeat the proposition *verbatim*:—

"Inasmuch as the only spiritual authority which I acknowledge is that which I conscientiously believe to have been transmitted by Jesus Christ to his church not to regulate by any outward coaction civil and temporal concerns of subjects and

citizens, but to direct souls by persuasion in the concerns of eternal Salvation."

Since the meeting in 1790 at which this proposition had been put forward, a very similar one, passed at the celebrated Synod of Pistoia, had been condemned by Rome,[1] so that it was regarded now as unsound. In accordance with Bishop Walmesley's suggestion, therefore, Bishop Douglass wrote to all those whose names were affixed to it in the *Blue Book*, nearly all of whom belonged to the London District. He received in reply answers which satisfied him. They denied having signed the proposition, and indeed no signing had taken place at the meeting: it had been read out, and verbal assent had been given by those present. This fact is of some importance, for it cannot be supposed that in merely listening to a proposition as read out any very close knowledge is obtained of the precise wording, and as there was no reason to suppose that the minutes of the meeting would ever be published, it was possible to give an assent to the general tenour of the proposition without being prepared to accept it precisely as it stood. Dr. Hussey indeed said that he had not been at the meeting at all, and those who saw him that evening must have misunderstood what he said. With respect to the substance of the proposition, they all contended that in the sense in which they understood it, the word "Persuasion" was opposed to "coercion," or "physical force," and by no means intended to exclude commands or censures, and they offered to subscribe to any requisite test of their orthodoxy. Bishop Douglass was satisfied with this: not so Bishop Walmesley, who considered that as their names had been publicly affixed, there should be a public retractation.

The third controversy which came back to Bishop Walmesley's mind was the case of the Staffordshire Clergy. This concerned no other bishop but himself, and he was free to act

[1] The following is the text of the condemnation, which was in the well-known bull "Auctorem Fidei," issued by Pius VI.: "Propositio affirmans *abusum fore auctoritatis Ecclesiae transferendo illam, ultra limites doctrinae ac morum, et eam extendendo ad res exteriores, et per vim exigendo id quod pendet a persuasione et corde;* tum etiam *multo minus ad eam pertinere, exigere per vim exteriorem subjectionem suis decretis;* quatenus indeterminatis illis verbis *extendendo ad res exteriores* notet velut abusum auctoritatis Ecclesiae usum ejus potestatis acceptae a Deo, qua usi sunt et ipsimet Apostoli in disciplina exteriore constituenda et sancienda: haeretica."

without consulting his colleagues. He remembered that the "Appeal to the Catholics of England" had never been revoked, and that it contained a statement of belief, popularly known as the "Staffordshire Creed," which was considered to contain heretical doctrine; while in appealing to the Catholics at large against one of the bishops, they were asserted, in the language commonly used, to have "cited him before an incompetent tribunal". Bishop Walmesley confined himself to the first of these charges.

From a fragmentary correspondence which has been preserved, it would appear that Bishop Gibson also thought that Mr. Wilkes and the others who had signed the "Protest and Appeal" ought to be required to retract; but with respect to the other two controversies, he was inclined to agree with Bishop Douglass that as several years had passed away, and they were to a great extent forgotten, more harm than good would follow from reviving them. Moreover, although the Mediation of 1792 had not been brought to a formal issue, there had been a tacit understanding that, at least so far as the laymen of the Committee were concerned, the questions should not be raised further. This had been loyally adhered to by the other side; so that there was good reason for the bishops to let the matter rest so far as was compatible with their duty to the Church.

Bishop Walmesley therefore found himself alone in his opinion. Nevertheless, he determined to act. In his own district he was supreme, and he proceeded to enforce his views as far as his jurisdiction went. He therefore issued the following ordinances to his clergy, dated June 3, 1797:—

"If any of those persons,

"1. Who signed their names to the noted Protest and Appeal against our condemnation of the Oath, Second Blue Book, pages 30 and 31;

"2. Who assented to, or allowed their names to be affixed to the heterodox proposition restrictive of the spiritual power of the Church, Third Blue Book, page 46;

"3. Who signed their names to what is generally called the 'Staffordshire Creed,' containing various errors and heretical doctrine set forth in 'An Appeal to the Catholics of England,' page 22;

"come into the Western District, we require of you not to admit them, if laics, to the participation of the Sacraments; if Clergymen, to the exercise of any ecclesiastical functions; until they have explicitly and publicly disavowed or withdrawn their signatures from those scandalous and erroneous acts.

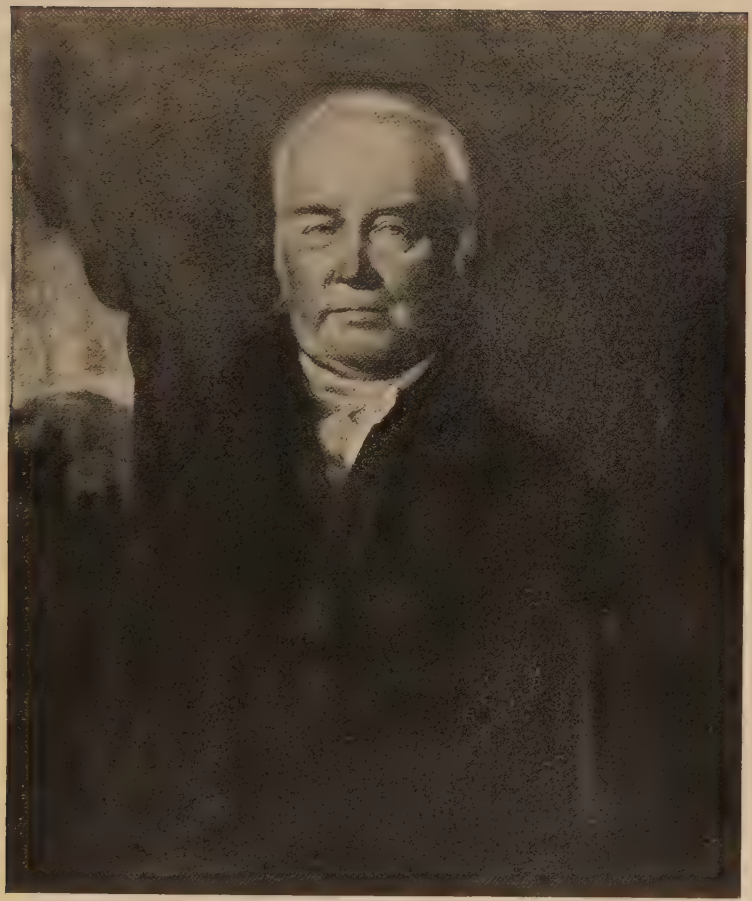
"In the article of death, if any of the above persons call for your assistance, with a truly penitent heart, we require of you before you administer any sacrament to them, that you exact, and if possible receive, in presence of two or more respectable Catholic witnesses, their formal retractation of the said acts, and duly inform me of the same."

In order to make this ordinance more public, Bishop Walmesley had it inserted in the Directory for the following year, which in those days went to press in the summer, and was published several weeks before the new year.

In practice, the censures here enumerated would have affected only two or three of the priests, on the rare occasions when they were accustomed to visit the West of England; but we can well understand that all alike would have felt them as a reflection on their good name and character, and resented them as such. Bishop Douglass continued strongly opposed to the whole procedure, considering it tyrannical and unwise, and likewise indirectly a reflection on himself, for nearly all the priests belonged to his district. He wrote to Bishop Walmesley begging him to reconsider his determination, and kept the printing of the Directory back to await his answer; but without result. Bishop Walmesley even called upon him to issue similar censures in the London District; but after some correspondence, Bishop Douglass finally wrote: "I have taken advice, which is agreeable to my own opinion, and I accordingly rather choose another line of conduct".

Soon after this, the Staffordshire clergy held a meeting at Sedgley Park, to consider the ordinance. Death had been busy among their number, and they were reduced to seven, not counting Joseph Berington, who had left the district, though he nevertheless continued in close communication with his former colleagues.[1] As a result of the meeting, Dr. Kirk was

[1] Of the original Staffordshire clergy, two—Rev. J. Perry and Rev. G. Maire—retired from the body on the issue of the "Protest and Appeal" in 1791. The Rev. Joseph Berington left the Midland District in 1793, and the Vicar General,



Rev. John Kirk, D.D.

commissioned to write to Bishop Walmesley, begging him to specify the false doctrine in the Creed. His letter was dated September 15; and on the 24th, Bishop Walmesley answered. He enumerated three statements which he considered unorthodox. The first was that already alluded to, where the Creed states that the Pope is supreme in spirituals by Divine appointment, but in discipline by ecclesiastical institution. The second was the statement that the jurisdiction of bishops was confined by well-known canons, which he contended was a denial of their power to legislate. The third was the words of the Creed, "We believe that the priesthood is from Christ, the rights of which are as sacred as those of the Pontifical and of the Episcopal order". This, Bishop Walmesley contended, was an assertion that priests and bishops were equal, and that there was no dependence of a priest on a bishop.

This letter from Bishop Walmesley gave rise to a long answer, entitled *The Exposition of Our Sentiments*, dated October 18, and signed by all seven surviving members of the Staffordshire clergy. The document was the work of Joseph Berington, and was a plain and intelligible explanation of their position. The first proposition is admitted to be awkwardly worded, and inaccurate as it stands; but they plead that by "supreme in discipline" they had in mind only ecclesiastical legislation, and that the proposition was capable of being interpreted in an orthodox sense. They express willingness to make it clear in any way which may be desired that this was their meaning. The other two propositions they contend to be accurate as they stand. They complain that Bishop Walmesley had affixed a meaning which never entered their

Rev. Anthony Clough, who succeeded him at Oscott, died there on September 7, of that year, having, it is said, made a conditional retractation, though latterly he had not taken any part in their proceedings, and his signature was not among those appended to the Staffordshire Creed. Of the others, Rev. William Hartley died in 1794, and no less than four of the others—Revv. George Beeston, Thomas Stone, Thomas Flynn and John Wright—in this very year, 1797. The Rev. Thomas Stone made a very full retractation some months before his death. The others who were dead were also generally said to have made satisfaction, though there is no definite evidence of what they did. This left seven—Revv. J. Carter, J. Corne, T. Southworth, J. Tasker, E. Eyre, J. Roe and J. Kirk—who signed the "Exposition of Our Sentiments". The Rev. J. Corne subsequently retracted on June 30, 1798, and Revv. E. Eyre and J. Tasker refused to take further active part. This reduced the company to four—Revv. J. Carter, T. Southworth, J. Roe and J. Kirk—who continued to the end.

heads, and which they are willing and anxious to disavow. They contend that the words cannot legitimately bear the sense ascribed to them, and at least as regards the third proposition, their contention appears to be well founded.

To the *Exposition of Our Sentiments* no answer was ever received. Bishop Walmesley indeed had made up his mind not to notice it; but in fact a few weeks after it was sent to him, his death took place. He had already been breaking in health. On September 10 he wrote: "Age has brought me many infirmities, and though a little better, my health is still but very indifferent". Bishop Berington visited him in the autumn, intending to expostulate as to the censure he had issued, but writes that "his infirmities both of mind and body deterred me from mentioning any subject which might irritate him". Some have seen in the severity of his last acts an evidence of the decay of his faculties: even Cardinal Gerdil thought that he had become too severe. Nevertheless, his death was not directly due to illness, but to an accident, though the effects of the accident must be ascribed to a diseased state of constitution, due presumably to old age. Bishop Douglass, in his Diary, gives us the only particulars which we have:—

"1797. November 25. On this day, at seven in the evening, aged 76, year of Episcopacy 40th, expired, after receiving all the rites of the Church, in great composure and resignation, Rt. Rev. Charles Walmesley, Bishop of Rama, Vicar Apostolic of the Western District. He was assisted in death by Rev. William Coombes; Bishop Gibson being present, gave the Viaticum and last Benediction.

"The Bishop, whilst taking the air in his go-cart or chair (common at Bath), was overturned by some passenger and received a bruise. This fall happened in the beginning of the week (day not mentioned). A mortification took place all down one thigh, and of this he died. Lord Arundell desired his remains might be buried in his chapel at Wardour, but as Bishop Walmesley expressed in his will that his body should be buried at Bristol, it was accordingly buried in the vault of the Catholic Chapel of that town. The funeral service was performed by Bishop Sharrock on December 4."[1]

[1] In the year 1906 his body was exhumed and taken to Downside Abbey, Bath: see p. 130.

We cannot take leave of so venerable and patriarchal a figure as Bishop Walmesley without some few reflections on the work of his life. Throughout the years we have been considering, he was the central figure among English Catholics, and if any one ever bore the heats and burdens of the day, it was he. His very enemies could not fail to look back with respect on that venerable figure, standing at one time all alone, as the guardian of the purity and orthodoxy of our religion at a time when the turmoil of party strife had obscured such principles in the minds of many. His strictness and even narrowness, which may now seem to us excessive, had much in the circumstances of the time to render it excusable, and in part necessary. We cannot but admire such persistent determination in the cause of religion, even though we may be bold enough to regret that he was wanting in that largeness of sympathy with those with whom he was not in agreement and that breadth of outlook which would have gone far towards softening the bitterness of his opponents, and mitigated the unfortunate dissensions among the Catholic body.

When Bishop Walmesley died, he left behind him the disputes with the Staffordshire clergy and others still unsettled. Bishop Sharrock, who succeeded as vicar apostolic, took a more lenient view with respect to the "Persuasive" resolution as it was popularly called. After some correspondence, a statement was prepared to the effect that the priests who had signed it, had long since given their bishops proof of their orthodoxy, and that the censure was removed. This statement was dated September 1, 1798, and signed by the vicars apostolic of the Northern, London and Western Districts, and published in the following year's directory.[1]

[1] The following is the text of the notice:—

"Whereas the late Right Rev. Doctor Walmesley, Bishop of Rama, and Vicar Apostolic of the Western District, did insert in the Directory of 1798 a letter ordering the clergy of his District not to admit certain persons described in that letter 'if laics to the participation of the sacraments, if clergymen to the exercise of any ecclesiastical functions until they have explicitly and publicly disavowed or withdrawn their signatures from those scandalous and erroneous acts';

"And whereas certain clergymen of the London District were comprised by the Right Reverend Prelate in his Interdict, under the words 'who assented to, or allowed their names to be affixed to the heterodox proposition restrictive of the spiritual power of the Church—Third Blue Book, p. 46';

"We, whose names are hereunto subscribed, bear witness that the said

With respect to the Staffordshire clergy, however, Bishop Sharrock renewed the censure of his predecessor. Joseph Berington wrote to Dr. Douglass, begging him to come forward as pacificator—but without success; and he fell back on advising the Staffordshire priests to appeal to their own bishop, Dr. Berington, who was of course sympathetic towards them. The latter had already written to Bishop Sharrock to protest against the censure, and likewise to Bishop Gibson, who had been in communication with Rev. Thomas Southworth, and had even taken it upon himself to draw out a formula of retractation, and called upon them to sign it. This he now withdrew. Bishop Berington then requested the Staffordshire clergy to put their case into writing, which they did, and it was presented to him at Longbirch on May 29. In reply, he showed them the letters which he had written to Bishops Sharrock and Gibson, and promised to write a similar one to themselves, testifying to their orthodoxy and to their edifying lives as priests. He promised to have the letter ready in time to be printed along with the rest of the correspondence, as soon as that was ready for press.

Although Cardinal Gerdil had accepted Bishop Berington's retractation, a long delay occurred before he was able to send the faculties. It was not usual to send documents of this kind by the public post, which was then both slow and unsafe, and owing to the unsettled state of the country, several months elapsed before a suitable opportunity offered for sending them.

clergymen did long ago give to their Bishop explicit assurance of their orthodoxy, and did declare,

"1st. That they never affixed, nor allowed their names to be affixed to the heterodox proposition restrictive of the Spiritual Powers of the Church.

"2d. That in assenting to the proposition, as moved by the proponent, they had not any idea of denying to the Church a power of enforcing obedience to her laws by the use of censures.

"3d. That they received and firmly adhered to the doctrine laid down in the Brief of his present Holiness which begins 'Auctorem Fidei'; and condemns that heterodox proposition under the numbers four and five of the said Brief.

"Wherefore, in consideration of these declarations made thus explicitly and publicly, the above mentioned Interdict is in their regard withdrawn.

"✠ William Acanthos, V.A.[1]
"✠ John Centurien, V.A.[2]
"✠ Gregory William, V.A.[3]

"London, *September* 1, 1798."

[1] Bishop Gibson. [2] Bishop Douglass. [3] Bishop Sharrock.

Bishop Berington became impatient. On February 12, 1798, he wrote to Bishop Douglass: "You tell me that my signature of the formula with certain restrictions has gladdened the heart of Cardinal Gerdil, but I do not find that the extraordinary powers are yet arrived, nor do I think they will. Believe me, Sir, whether the Cardinal's heart be gladdened or saddened matters will go on in the same style, or probably worse than ever."

At length, however, an opportunity arrived of sending the faculties. The Rev. P. MacPherson, the agent of the Scottish bishops, was returning to England, in charge of the students of the English and Scots' Colleges, who were forced to leave Rome on account of the invasion of the French. Bishop Berington's faculties were accordingly entrusted to him, with instructions to deliver them if possible to Dr. Berington himself, but otherwise to Dr. Douglass, who would forward them. Cardinal Gerdil likewise wrote a letter addressed jointly to Bishops Gibson and Douglass, congratulating them on the termination of the business.

The Rev. P. MacPherson and the students sailed from Civita Vecchia on March 31, and landed at Marseilles three days later. From thence they succeeded in crossing France without much difficulty; but arriving at Gravelines just at the time when the English had landed at Ostend, they were detained by the Municipality. Mr. MacPherson had to go to Paris, and eighteen days elapsed before the party could continue their journey. They eventually arrived in London about the beginning of June. Seeing no immediate prospect of delivering the faculties to Dr. Berington, he handed them to Dr. Douglass on June 5, together with the joint letter addressed to him and Dr. Gibson. Dr. Douglass wrote at once to Dr. Gibson; but three days later, before there had been time for an answer, Bishop Berington's death took place with startling suddenness. It is recorded by Dr. Douglass in his Diary as follows:—

"1798. June 11. Received this day a letter from Doctor Bew, dated Longbirch 10th inst., in which he announces to me the death of Bishop Berington, by an apoplectic fit. Bishop Berington and Mr. Kirk were returning home from Sedgley Park on horseback last Friday evening, the 8th inst., and between Wolverhampton and Longbirch the Bishop's horse

startled. He dismounted [and] sat himself down on the roadside. Dr. Morrison, of Wolverhampton, was accidentally coming that way. He took the Bishop in his arms, and in about five minutes' time the Bishop expired. Requiescat in pace. . . . It was about eight in the evening that the Bishop expired."

From another account we learn that on the previous day, being Corpus Christi, Bishop Berington had celebrated Mass, as it turned out, for the last time: and on the day of his death, he had heard the Mass of his chaplain, Dr. Kirk. The funeral took place on the 11th, in the churchyard at Brewood, in which parish Longbirch is situated.

It devolved on Dr. Bew to acquaint the clergy of the Midlands with the death of their Bishop. In doing so, he at the same time requested them to give their votes as to whom they would wish to be presented to Rome for his successor, claiming the approval of Dr. Douglass for this course. Owing to the discussion to which it gave rise, it will be well to give his circular *verbatim*:—[1]

"LONGBIRCH, *June* 15, 1798.

"DEAR SIR,

"I have to give you the melancholy information of the death of our revered Prelate, Mr. Berington, whom I hope you will remember in your prayers and as soon as possible. I have informed Bp. Douglass that Messrs. Beaumont and Beeston,[2] the two other grand Vicars, are collecting the votes of the priests in their respective parts, of which measure he has signified his approbation. He has declared his willingness to procure a person who may be agreeable to the general wish.

"I remain, dear Sir, &c.

"J. BEW."

It seems clear that Dr. Bew acted in good faith in claiming the approbation of Bishop Douglass, which he judged from the general tone of his letter, added to the fact that he raised no opposition to the course proposed. Nor was there any reason to think that Rome would be averse to an expression of opinion,

[1] *Westminster Archives.*

[2] Rev. Edward Beaumont, chaplain to the Duke of Norfolk at Norwich, Grand Vicar of East Anglia; and Rev. George Beeston, of Eastwell in Leicestershire, Grand Vicar of the Northern division of the Midland District.

provided no rights were claimed beyond that. In the case of the vacancy in the London District, Cardinal Antonelli had said as much as this, and at this time Cardinal Gerdil admitted to Mr. Smelt that, ordinarily speaking, the people had a right to expect that their wishes should be generally consulted. Nevertheless, as soon as Dr. Douglass heard that his name was quoted by Dr. Bew, he at once repudiated having given any kind of approbation, in consequence of which several priests wrote recalling their votes. The Regulars of the district refrained from voting, considering that the appointment only concerned them indirectly; and the clergy in the Lincolnshire District contented themselves with a hope that the person chosen might be of a peaceable disposition, and acceptable to the clergy. Of the rest, forty-two eventually recorded their votes, of whom thirty voted for Dr. Bew. The others named were Rev. J. Corne (of Shrewsbury), Dr. Rigby, Rev. G. Chamberlain, and Dr. Gregory Stapleton. The result was duly reported to Rev. Robert Smelt. The object of the whole manœuvre was of course to try and keep out Dr. Milner, or any one else of his type, and in order to further their opposition to him, they sent a definite memorial to the Pope, begging that he might not be appointed.[1]

The bishops this time acted in concert, and sent up three names, Revv. Thomas Eyre, John Milner and Thomas Smith. The result of the contest was, as in the case of the London District in 1790, to cause delay, which, owing to the disturbed state of Rome, was prolonged for more than two years.

During the vacancy, a curious question of law arose. Dr. Bew had been vicar-general to Bishop Berington, and according to the *Regula Missionis* of Benedict XIV., it appeared to

[1] The following extract from the Diary of Bishop Douglass explains itself, though it is difficult to account for the origin of the paragraph referred to:—

"1798. July 20. The *Times* (a newspaper) of yesterday says: 'Yesterday (*viz.* Thursday) the poll closed at Oscott for the election of a Bishop to succeep Bishop Berington, decd., and that

'For Dr. Bew	voted	2	clergy and	297	laity.
„ Mr. Southworth	„	25	„	„ 274	„
„ Mr. Kirk	„	1	„	„ 36	„

That a doubt had arisen which of the two first is the successful candidate, B. having more votes of the laity, S. of the clergy. The latter has the preference because he is a friend of the clergy. But the case is recommended to be decided by lots.'

"The above must have been put in the paper by way of banter."

devolve on him to govern the district until the appointment of a new bishop. Against this it was argued that as Bishop Berington had never received his "extraordinary" faculties, his appointment of Dr. Bew was invalid, and that therefore there was no one qualified as required by the *Regula Missionis*. Acting on this view, Bishop Gibson, as senior Vicar Apostolic, claimed the right of jurisdiction, and applied to Rome to confirm it. Dr. Bew refused to recognise his authority, and a state of conflict ensued. Eventually Cardinal Borgia, who had been entrusted for the time with plenary powers, commissioned Bishop Gibson to govern the district. Still, however, the matter was not settled. Dr. Gibson refused to show Cardinal Borgia's letter to Dr. Bew, considering that he had no official position, and no right to demand to see it. Dr. Bew, on the other hand, contended that until the letter was formally shown to him, it was nugatory, for his authority could only be set aside by a definite abrogation of the ordinary law, and until such abrogation was made known to him in the proper way, his faculties continued. He appealed to Dr. Douglass, and then to Mgr. Erskine; but the only answer he obtained was that Cardinal Borgia had undoubtedly been given plenary powers, so that if he pleased, he could suspend any or all of the *Regula Missionis*.

The question of jurisdiction became acute when in the Lent of 1799, Bishop Gibson issued a pastoral, giving certain dispensations from the strict law of fasting, as was usual in all the districts. Wishing to avoid all disputes, Dr. Bew took the charitable course of confirming these dispensations hypothetically on their requiring it. He sent the following very curious circular to the clergy:—

"Oscott, *Feb.* 5, 1799.

"Dear Sir,

"The Apostolical Vicar of the Northern District, as Senior Apostolical Vicar, professes to address with pastoral authority the clergy and laity of this District on the manner of observing the present Lent. But as the validity of his regulations, unless supported by some declaration or personal grant from the Holy See, would undoubtedly be questioned were not the Vicars General to obviate all occasions of scruple; wherefore to comply with the authority of the Vicar of the

Northern District, if he possess it; or to supply the deficiency if he do not, the Vicars General adopt and confirm his regulations, *viz.* Meat allowed on Sundays, Tuesdays and Thursdays till the last week, everything else as in the regulations for this district last year.

"JOHN BEW, *Vicar General.*"[1]

The state of the unfortunate Midland District had now become stranger than ever. Most people indeed accepted Bishop Gibson's word and looked upon him as their superior; but a certain number of the clergy refused to recognise his claim until he showed his letter. Those chiefly concerned were the remnant of the Staffordshire clergy. Dr. Bew was of course sympathetically inclined towards them, while Dr. Gibson was quite oppositely minded. They had recently published their defence in a pamphlet the title of which was *A Short and Plain Statement of Facts.* As Bishop Berington had been prevented by death from writing the letter which he had promised, they fell back on his letters to Bishops Sharrock and Gibson, from each of which they quoted extracts, and added also their whole correspondence with Bishop Walmesley, including the *Exposition of Our Sentiments.* The pamphlet was published at the end of November, 1798.

We can now return to the case of Rev. Joseph Wilkes. In 1796 he had moved from Heythrop to Newport in Shropshire, another mission under the patronage of the Shrewsbury family. He was still in the Midland District, so that there was no likelihood of his bishop calling upon him for a retractation of his signature to the *Blue Books.* The other three vicars apostolic, however, looked upon it as a question outside the local affairs of the Midland District, and appealed to his Benedictine superiors to insist upon his doing the same as Rome had called upon Bishop Berington to do. It was arranged that the matter should be gone into at the Benedictine Chapter, which was to open at Birmingham on July 12, 1798. Among those who attended the Chapter was Bishop Shar-

[1] Dr. Bew was the only person properly styled Vicar General. Dr. Kirk adds the following note:—

"*N.B.*—To give additional weight to his authority Dr. Bew consulted the Vicarii Foranei, Messrs. B[eaumont] and B[eeston], whom improperly he calls Vicars General, tho' that name be frequently given them by the clergy."

rock, in his quality as a Benedictine. The Rev. Joseph Wilkes himself of course attended, and as a result of long discussion, public and private, he drew up a declaration which he asked them to accept as sufficient. In this declaration he deals not only with the "Protest and Appeal" in the *Second Blue Book*, but also with the "Persuasive Resolution," in which he was likewise implicated. Although it will be seen that he cleverly evades any straightforward retractation, the document nevertheless contains some remarkable admissions which make it worth while to give it in full. The original in Mr. Wilkes's own handwriting is among the *Clifton Archives*.

DECLARATION OF THE REVEREND JOSEPH WILKES.

"On the 16th of September, 1791, I willingly withdrew the Protest, and gave up the Appeal contained in the publications of the Catholic Committee. I have never since revived, either directly or indirectly, that Protest and Appeal. My letter to Thomas Clifford Esq. was a mere narrative, and never intended by me to convey more than the recital of a fact. Ever since the 10th of September, 1791, I have considered the Protest and Appeal as absolute nullities in my regard, and having been willingly withdrawn, and given up on terms accepted by the Bishop of Rama, as no more existing in my regard than if they had never been. From the beginning the Protest and Appeal never appeared to me free from blemish. They were drawn up in circumstances of urgency and haste, and without any model to follow. Hence some irregularities and informalities in the manner, besides an extension of the Protest to more objects than were necessary. The language of it ought to have been more temperate and more respectful to the Right Reverend personages, against whose measures the Protest, and from whose letter the Appeal were made.

"When I assented to the restrictive Proposition, 3rd Blue Book, p. 46, I was not aware that it could be understood in any sense which limited the power of the Church. It was always my firm belief that the Church of Christ enjoyed and will enjoy to the end of the world the same authority received from God which the Apostles themselves used in enacting and sanctioning external discipline; and of course that the Church has a right to make laws for all the faithful, and to

enforce obedience by external judgments and salutary punishments. Done in the presence of Right Reverend William Sharrock.

"JOSEPH WILKES.

"BIRMINGHAM, *July* 13, 1798."

The Chapter promised to transmit this declaration to the vicars apostolic. A few days later, however, Mr. Wilkes printed and published his own account of the proceedings of the Chapter in his regard, which gave great offence, not only to the bishops, but also to his Benedictine superiors, and we are not surprised to find that Bishop Douglass learnt from Bishop Sharrock that "Messrs. Warmoll and Cowley were concocting measures for the quiet removal of Mr. Wilkes from the mission". The order was finally sent by Rev. John Warmoll, in a letter to Mr. Wilkes dated May 25, 1799, withdrawing his missionary faculties. Mr. Wilkes appealed to Rev. William Cowley, as President General. His appeal was dated June 5: on the 24th of the same month Mr. Cowley died. His successor was Rev. J. B. Brewer, an intimate friend of Mr. Wilkes, who lost no time in vindicating his position. He judged that the formalities prescribed by the rule had not been complied with; that Mr. Warmoll should have appealed to Mr. Cowley who alone had power to suspend a priest; and that there had been other want of formalities. Therefore he considered the suspension invalid, and he himself saw no reason to renew it. His decision was printed under date August 24, 1799, and for the time Mr. Wilkes triumphed.

A word or two may finally be added with respect to the laymen who had signed the "Protest and Appeal". They had all expressed their regret in general terms, and although the bishops were not entirely satisfied with their letters, it does not appear that any of them thought it necessary to take further steps to enforce submission until the censure was promulgated by Bishop Walmesley in 1797. This died with the bishop, and does not seem to have been renewed. The following letter from Charles Butler to Bishop Walmesley is, however, worth publishing, in justice to the writer, and to show his frame of mind with regard to the controversy. He wrote a somewhat similar letter to each of the other vicars apostolic.

CHARLES BUTLER TO BISHOP WALMESLEY.[1]

"MY LORD,

". . . I have now to request your Lordship will permit me to avail myself of this opportunity of troubling your Lordship on the following subject. I am extremely concerned that I was ever in any opposition to the Vicars Apostolic. Permit me, my Lord, to observe that neither the Protestation nor the Oath originated with me. On the contrary, the bill I prepared contained no Oath, and was very nearly the same as that which passed. That I had some hand in writing what are termed the Blue Books, I do not deny, but I have not been concerned, either directly or indirectly, in any other publication. All the Committee would inform your Lordship that on every occasion I exerted myself to promote harmony and good humour between the Vicars Apostolic and them. The principal objection to the Oath was upon the clause that 'the Church has no right to interfere with the rights, persons &c. of the faithful'. I thought, and still think, that the interference here spoken of is that kind of coercion (as imprisonment, death, &c.) which belongs only to the temporal power of the state, and that by the clause in question nothing more is disclaimed than what is disclaimed by St. Austin when he says, 'Audite reges terræ non impedio dominationem vestram'. The 'interference' mentioned in the Oath, and the 'impedio' mentioned by St. Augustine, being in my apprehension perfectly synonomous. This was all I contended for. If, however, upon this, or upon any other ground, I have been wrong, if the doctrines I contended for were in the slightest respect contrary to the religious faith or doctrines of the Church, if the manner I contended for them was disrespectful to the Vicars, or in other respect improper, I am truly sorry for it, and ask your Lordship's pardon. I am publishing a life of my uncle. I mean there to profess an unreserved submission of all my writings to the Church. For the present, therefore, what I here mention to your Lordship is in confidence unless I should die before the publication of the work, in which case I wish it made known.

[1] *Clifton Archives*, vol. x.

"In respect to the charge brought against me by Mr. Robert Plowden, of assisting (and as he intimates, acting as secretary) at the meeting of the twelve priests who drew up some resolutions respecting the Oath,[1] which were printed at the end of the Blue Book, I assure your Lordship it is impossible to be more free from reproach on this account than I am. I was not at the meeting, I knew nothing of it before it was held, only heard of it as others did by report; I did not advise the insertion of the Resolutions in the Blue Book; and if I had worded them, I should have used very different expressions.

"As to what Mr. Milner and Mr. Charles Plowden have written on the subject of the alteration of the Protestation,[2] permit me to assure your Lordship all and everything they have said on it is untrue. I am very willing to give credit to the uprightness of their intentions, and to think that they themselves believe what they write: yet let me say that many years will not elapse before they and I shall appear in judgment before God, and they will then find that in this respect they have propagated against me an absolute falsehood. But from my soul I pardon them both.

"I do not, however, wish to intrude on your Lordship's time with anything further upon the subject. I only add that with the greatest respect, I have the honour to be

"Your Lordship's most obedient servant,

"CHARLES BUTLER.

"LIN. INN, 16 *May*, 1797."

Finally at this time peace was made between the Rev. Joseph Berington and Bishop Douglass. In response to a letter from the bishop calling his attention to the unorthodox tendency of some of his writings, Berington wrote a long letter of explanation, dated Buckland, February 25, 1797. At the end he signed his name to the Creed of Pope Pius IV., as he had been requested to do. Dr. Douglass in reply wrote as follows:—[3]

[1] Including the "Persuasive" resolution.

[2] See Chapter xxii.

[3] Both letters were printed by Joseph Berington, in pamphlet form, as had been agreed.

"SIR,

"I perused with great attention the letter which in MS. you submitted to my consideration, and addressed to me. The passages from your writings which you have examined were suggested by me and copied from a late publication. I now therefore say I consider your letter as adequate to the removing of the scandal that has been taken, and I deem your faith pure and orthodox.

"Your humble servant in J. C.

"JOHN DOUGLASS."

CHAPTER XXVIII.

THE FRENCH REFUGEE PRIESTS (CONTINUED).

1795-1800.

IF we take a survey of Catholic England as it appeared during the last five years of the eighteenth century, we find it still much influenced by the large number of French emigrants, both clergy and laity. Some idea of their number may be gained from the following return, which was delivered to the Duke of Portland as Home Secretary, early in the year 1797 :—

French Clergy supported by Government	5,000
French laity (including women and children)	2,950
French Clergy not supported by Government, but by their own industry, or by families	500
French emigrants not supported by Government, but living on the wrecks of their fortunes which they had saved	3,000
Of this description in Jersey	700
Total	12,150

We shall devote this chapter to a short description of the state of the emigrant clergy during the last five years of the century, to the different works which they undertook, and to the events which happened in their regard.

The first and chief misfortune which we have to chronicle was the closing of the King's House at Winchester, and the consequent dispersion of the community who had been leading so edifying a life within its walls. The cause of the closing was simply that the building was required for the purpose of barracks. The following letter from Milner to Bishop Douglass gives particulars of what was done. The letter is undated, but from the second sentence it follows that it was written on September 21, 1796.

"The French here," Milner writes, "are in the greatest calamity and desolation. To-morrow they are to commence the

operation of removing from the King's House, though not out of any neglect or ill will on the part of the Government, but purely because the house is necessary to make barracks of, in order to guard against an invasion. In the meantime, the King's Arms (that was) at Reading is prepared to receive a hundred or two of them; another house at Thame in Oxfordshire about a hundred; and Lady Buckingham informed me last week (though it has not been announced to the French here) that his Lordship would give up his house at Eastbury near Blandford, to accommodate two hundred more. On the first announcing of this bad news by the Bishop of Léon, he gave him £100 towards the necessary expenses of the removal. He has since written to the Duke of Portland to suspend the blow if possible; if not, for large pecuniary assistance." [1]

It is instructive to learn that in taking possession of the two houses here alluded to, it was found advisable to divide the French clergy according to their places of origin. Some little rivalry had shown itself between Normans and Bretons, and it was considered better that they should be grouped together in separate houses. The King's Arms at Reading was opened to receive about 200 Norman priests, under Abbé Martin, who had been the superior at Winchester; while at Thame there were 100 priests, all Bretons, under Abbé Despons from St. Brieuc. In addition to these, a house was hired at Paddington Green, then a village outside London, where some sixty Norman priests—for these were in the majority—were settled, under Abbé Romain.

The priests were received on the whole well at all these places, though perhaps less so at Reading than elsewhere. A tradition exists to this day how one of the French priests was murdered by three persons who fell in with him almost by chance, and were only actuated by the motive of his being a priest. They threw him into the river, and it is said that his last words as he was drowning were a prayer for his murderers. Two of these died shortly afterwards; the third was eventually converted on his deathbed, saying that during his whole life the words of the priest whom he had assisted to murder were present before his mind as a reproach to him, and as a call to join the true Church.

[1] *Westminster Archives.*

The establishment at Thame brought the French clergy into close contact with Edmund Burke, who lived a short distance outside Beaconsfield, not more than nine miles away. Burke had always been a friend to the Catholics. Though not himself a member of the Church, he had many friends and relatives who were, and he had married a Catholic wife, though she had afterwards lapsed. His sympathy with those who suffered during the French Revolution is well known, his work *Reflexions on the Revolution in France*, having been one great reason which had induced the emigrant clergy to seek an asylum in this country.

Burke retired from Parliament in July, 1794, broken in health, and devoted himself to a quiet life in the country, though he continued to write in favour of the "War Party," which made Windham say that his life was the most valuable one in England at that time. While living on his estate at Gregories, near Beaconsfield, he made the acquaintance of many of the French *émigrés*. In 1796 he devoted himself to the establishment of a school for the sons of French officers who had fallen in battle, and of the French nobility generally. A large house, capable of holding sixty boys, was obtained at Penn, a village about three miles from Beaconsfield, and during the first year, according to Dr. Douglass, there were already 43 or 44 boys there. The following entry in his Diary gives some rather quaint details:—

"1796. June. Rt. Hon. Edmund Burke applies to me for an English Professor to teach English &c. in his school at Penn. I sent to him Rev. Mr. Coombes from Old Hall Green. Mr. C. waited on Mr. B. at Beaconsfield. Mr. B. is highly pleased with Mr. C.; but the employment only being an A B C affair, Bishop Walmesley was engaged to extricate Mr. C. from the engagement, by alleging that he could not be spared from the College at Old Hall Green &c. Mr. B. acknowleged his school was not deserving of a Professor of Mr. C.'s merit, and Mr. C. returned to Old Hall Green with only an engagement to provide him with a Master." [1]

During the early days of the school, Burke used to be frequently seen taking his recreation among the boys, and we are told that this helped to cheer him in the despondency

[1] The Rev. John Devereux accepted the post.

mainly due to the death of his only son from which he suffered in his later days. But he did not live long to enjoy the results of his work. He had spent the autumn of 1796 at Bath, and had derived benefit from his stay. Feeling his illness growing upon him, he paid a second visit the following January; but he grew no better, and practically returned home to die. His death took place on July 9, 1797. Dr. Douglass sums up his appreciation of him in a few words:—

"He was particularly friendly and truly serviceable to me, and always ready to assist the Catholic body. He drew up the first address of the Catholics to His Majesty in 1778, and in all our applications for relief assisted us with his interest and with his pen."

Butler speaks similarly:—

"He never lost an opportunity of recommending the Catholics to the favour of the public. It may be doubted whether without the aid of his eloquence either of the bills for our relief would have passed."[1]

The school at Penn did not die with its founder. It had been established on a permanent basis. The Government had reimbursed Burke for all he had spent on it, and a permanent endowment had been arranged for, out of the money set aside for the French refugees. It continued for many years afterwards, so long in fact as there were enough of the exiled French aristocracy to require it. A similar school for the daughters of the French nobility was founded by Miss Doughty at Blyth House, Kensington, and in the first year there were already twenty-five pupils.

During the years 1796 and 1797 there was a temporary reaction in France, and a formal invitation was given by the Directory for the exiled priests to return, while those who had been gathered together at homes and institutions as superannuated were set at liberty. There seemed a prospect of the general re-establishment of religion, and a considerable number of priests who were of a hopeful disposition returned. The English Catholics profited by the temporary cessation of persecution to endeavour to recover possession of their colleges in France, and elsewhere on the Continent. They succeeded in securing the Seminary at Paris, while the ex-Jesuits recovered

[1] *Hist. Mem.*, iii., p. 345.

their Academy at Liège, and the Dominicans their house at Bornheim. With respect to Douay and St. Omer, less success was obtained. The Rev. Francis Tuite and Mr. Cleghorn, the two Procurators of St. Omer, went over to France in the summer of 1797, crossing from Dover to Calais on June 21, and succeeded in reaching St. Omer; but found themselves unable to achieve much. The college had been converted into a hospital, and was full of patients. The college at Douay had become a military store, and so far no active measures had been taken to reclaim it. In the month of May the French agent there had written to President Daniel, asking him to send some one over to claim possession. Before the end of the month, Mr. Daniel had written to Dr. Poynter begging him to go over; but his duties at St. Edmund's College prevented his being spared at that time. The following extract from the Diary of Bishop Douglass indicates the state of the college at Douay:—

"1796. December 19. Mr. Baynes, formerly a student at Douay College, and now an inhabitant of Lille, breakfasted here this morning, and told us that Douay College was offered to sale, but that M. Warrington, the Commissary at War, sent a petition to the Committee at Paris, praying that the English College might be preserved for a magazine for corn, and that his petition was granted. It is now employed for the keeping of corn, bedding, blankets, &c. and other baggage for the army. Almost all the partitions of the Students' rooms are thrown down. The books of the Divines' Library and Philosophical instruments and books and the marble tabernacle are kept in the College of Anchin,[1] under the care of a man who has the title of librarian. He adds that the shoemaker and other servants have behaved ill, and carried off many goods out of the College on the pretence that they were given to them by the Superiors before they were sent to Doullens."

The following letter from Dr. Poynter to Bishop Douglass written on August 19 gives additional details of the state of affairs as described in the letters of Messrs. Tuite and Cleghorn received at St. Edmund's:—

[1] One of the oldest colleges connected with the university, founded by the abbot of the neighbouring monastery of Anchin.

"My Lord,

"Having lately transmitted to Bishop Gibson at his Lordship's request some account of the information received from Messrs. Tuite and Cleghorn, I flatter myself that I shall do an acceptable service to your Lordship if I address to your Lordship a few lines on the subject.

"These gentlemen inform us that they have been very kindly received at St. Omers, and particularly that the municipality of the town has shown itself very favourable to them in giving them all encouragement and assistance in the recovery of their property. They have restored to them the private effects belonging to the President and other Gentlemen of the College, and furnished them with all the papers and other deeds that could be found to enable them to secure the common property of the College. Mr. Cleghorn mentions that by a letter received from M. Deprez, our agent at Douay, he is informed that the municipality of Douay is very differently affected in our regard, that they wish not to see us return, and that some are bent on the sale of our College. Messrs. Tuite and Cleghorn have not yet received their passports to go to Paris, but they are assured they shall have them very soon, and the delay is caused by the changes and confusion that have taken place in the ministry. By a letter received three days ago, Mr. Tuite says that Godin, the agent at Paris, writes to M. Doullens, their agent at St. Omers, that the delay they experience is only caused by the changes at Paris; that the decree is in their favour; that he waits the sanction of the Directory. Now Mr. Tuite observes that this (which is rather obscurely expressed) cannot be understood of their passports, for the sanction of the Directory would not be required for them, since the *Ministre de Police* is authorised to grant them. Besides, this letter is addressed to M. Doullens, who had written to claim the College of St. Omers, so that there is reason to think that it relates to the recovery of their College. Mr. Cleghorn mentions that the Municipality has employed an architect to value the damages that have been done to the College by the fury of the Revolution, and that he estimated them at £3,000 sterling, that many friends assured them they would be indemnified. Mr. Cleghorn and Mr. Tuite have lately paid a visit to the nuns at Aire, and were happy to find

them all very well. Mr. Cleghorn mentions that it is his opinion and that of some intelligent friends that it will be extremely useful, if not necessary, to obtain some clause to be inserted in the articles of peace, for the restoration of all our property; but it is a very delicate matter to determine the expression so as to include all and not to run counter to some of their constitutional decrees. This is a subject on which several letters have passed between Mr. Stapleton and Mr. Smith, who both of them very well understand the constitution and decrees as far as they affect our affairs. Mr. Stapleton expected Mr. Smith here before this; after an agreement with him about the form of the expression, he intended to do himself the honour to wait on your Lordship and deliberate on this common cause. Bishop Gibson informs me that Mr. Daniel was to meet him and Mr. Smith at York last Wednesday or Thursday, when they would endeavour to come to some decision on measures to be taken in this critical situation of the Colleges. Mr. Sharrock informs me by a letter this morning that he has had the honour of speaking to your Lordship on the subject of a clause in our favour. He mentions the term 'Corporate bodies'; but we apprehend that that term would not suffice without some qualification, as Corporate Bodies are not acknowledged in the Republic. Besides, we must not forget the property in France which may stand in the name of individuals, in the funds or elsewhere. If your Lordship should wish to receive any further information on the subject, Mr. Stapleton would be happy to communicate all in his power. I beg leave to conclude now, as Mr. D'Ancel[1] is in a hurry. Mr. Stapleton begs leave to unite in most humble respects to your Lordship, with your Lordship's

"most obedient and humble servant,

"W. POYNTER.

"OLD HALL GREEN, *August* 19, 1797."

The reaction in France proved only temporary, and was succeeded by a further revolution, in consequence of which Messrs. Tuite and Cleghorn had to return to England. Dr. Douglass summarises the events as follows:—

"1797. Sept. 5. The ill blood caused betwixt the Councils

[1] A French *émigré* priest teaching at St. Edmund's College: see p. 3.

on one part and the Directory on the other by the decrees for the recall of the priests and the attempts to restrain the power of the five Directors &c. having fermented, and civil broils being expected, Mr. Windham, Secretary at War, has sent over for no more passports to be given to French priests to go over to France, lest they should be involved in troubles on their arriving at their homes.

"Sept. 20. On this day arrived for dinner from France Messrs. Tuite and Cleghorn. The three members (Jacobins) of the Directory, *viz.*, La Ravillère-Lepaux, Rewbel and Barras, having gained the army, surrounded the Councils and arrested Barthélemy, a Director (Carnot, the other Director escaped), and all those of the Council of 500, who voted for the return of the priests, and seemed to favour Royalty, among whom was my friend Camille Jourdain of Lyons, who made the motion for the return of the priests. Merlin of Douay, and Francois of Neufchateau being chosen in the place of Barthélemy and Carnot, members of the Directory, and the Revolution was completed. The negotiation for peace was broken off, Lord Malmesbury returned on this day to London, and the Minister of Police at Paris wrote to the Municipality at Calais to order Messrs. Tuite and Cleghorn to return to England by the first vessel.

"They dined with me to-day, and say that the College of St. Omer's is totally stript, that nothing remains of the building besides the outward walls, the staircases and windows. It had been used for a hospital. That the priests who don't take the Oath of hatred to kings &c. are ordered to quit the territory of the Republic in 15 days, under pain of being treated as emigrants and shot. That the Grand Vicars, not knowing what advice to give, leave the priests to their own consciences, and that many orthodox priests have taken that Oath, that many others are quitting France, and that all the little Oratories in private houses in which the orthodox priests used to say Mass, are now shut. When will the Revolution and all these evils end?"

In another passage Dr. Douglass indicates that the persecution in France has become exceedingly severe, and that in their search for priests, the revolutionists have taken to the use of bloodhounds, to disclose the presence of those hiding

behind wainscottings, or elsewhere out of sight. He mentions also an anecdote of one priest who met a fellow priest who had taken the original civic Oath, and reproached him for so doing. The constitutional priest gave as his reason that one must live—"parce qu'il faut vivre"; to which the other at once replied that he had refused the Oath, "parce qu'il faut mourir".

After this time, the French priests in London seem to have resigned themselves to a prolonged exile. We find them building churches of a more permanent type than hitherto, and several who were already ministering to congregations partly French and partly English, looking on such missions in future as the permanent work of their lives. One of the best known of these was Abbé Maurel of Hampstead. He had been driven from France at the time of the general banishment of the clergy in 1792, when he had been a priest less than two years. In 1796 he settled at Hampstead, where he spent the remaining fifty-six years of his life. At first his congregation was almost entirely French; but afterwards, it gradually became more and more English. The little chapel built by him in Holly Place is still in use. Another figure well known for many years among the Catholics of London was that of Abbé Voyaux de Franous, a former Professor of the Sorbonne, who founded the mission at Chelsea, then a village in the outskirts of London. During the Terror he had been actually condemned to be guillotined, and only escaped that fate by a very remarkable providence. In like manner, on the other side of London, a mission was founded at Tottenham. Mass had already been said there, in the room of a house, by Abbé Cheverus, afterwards Bishop of Boston in the United States, and later on Cardinal Archbishop of Bordeaux. He only resided at Tottenham for two years (1794-96), but after his departure Abbé Filaire and later again Abbé Salmon continued his work until the mission became permanent.

In London itself, the Catholic Directories enumerate eight French chapels.[1] The best known of these was the small, unpretending structure still standing in Little George Street,

[1] Dudley Court, Soho; Tottenham Place; Conway Street, Fitzroy Square; Brill Place, Somers Town; Prospect Place, St. George's Fields; Little George Street; the French Ward in the Middlesex Hospital; and Paddington Green.

a small turning out of King Street, Portman Square. This chapel derived its importance chiefly from the fact that it was attended by the French Royal Family. The mission was originally founded in a room of a house in Dorset Mews. In 1797, Abbé Bourret, a Sulpician from Montreal, undertook its charge, and built the present church, which was opened in 1799. It soon became one of the chief centres for the *émigré* clergy, and it is said that Masses were proceeding at each of the four altars daily from six o'clock in the morning until after one o'clock in the afternoon. On Sundays there were often as many as fifteen bishops assisting at the chief Mass, while on the opposite side of the sanctuary was a bench reserved for members of the French Royal Family in England. These included at different times the Count de Provence (Louis XVIII.), the Count d'Artois (afterwards Charles X.); the Duke d'Orleans (afterwards Louis Philippe); the Princess Royal (daughter of Louis XVI.); the Prince de Condé and the Duc de Berry. The Abbé Edgeworth, who had attended Louis XVI. on the scaffold, paid a short visit to London in 1797, and went thence to Scotland, to wait on the Count d'Artois; but he did not make a long stay, and returned to Belgium, where he remained as chaplain to Louis XVIII., who was then at Blankenburg.

We proceed to say a few words on each of the other French missions named in the Directory. That in Dudley Court, Soho, was opened somewhat earlier, in 1795, and has already been alluded to. At Paddington Green there was nothing beyond a room in the house where the clergy had taken refuge when the King's House at Winchester was closed. In the neighbourhood of St. George's Fields, where a large number of French clergy had congregated, a regular chapel was opened in Prospect Place, in February, 1799. At the opening ceremony Dr. Douglass sang the Mass, the sermon being preached by M. Filonneau, Grand Vicar of la Rochelle, who had himself built the church. At the Middlesex Hospital the West Ward was set apart for the French, and by a special arrangement, at that time unprecedented, facilities were given for the celebration of Mass at regular intervals.

The two remaining French churches were closely connected with the labours of the Abbé Carron, who came to London in

1796, and remained nearly twenty years. He was by far the most striking personality among the exiled priests, known and respected by Protestants and Catholics alike, and some space must be devoted to an account of his work.

Guy Toussaint Carron, the son of a Breton lawyer, was born at Rennes in 1760. He had already been a priest nine years, and had gained a reputation by his extraordinary zeal and energy in the foundation of pious works, when, with the other clergy, he was called upon to take the Civic Oath, and on his refusal, was condemned to banishment. In company with some 250 others, recusants like himself, he was placed on board one of two ships destined to convey them from St. Malo to Jersey. They set sail on September 14, 1792, and like the majority of the clergy exiled at that time, they encountered tempestuous weather. One of the ships succeeded in regaining the port; the other, in which Carron was, was given up for lost; but it eventually weathered the storm, and on the third day Carron landed safely at Jersey. Here he found some three or four thousand exiles, who had arrived during the past month. The religious state of the island was strange indeed to those who had been brought up in a Catholic country. All the people were Calvinists, and there was not a single place of Catholic worship. Nominally it was subject to the Vicar Apostolic of the London District;[1] but no bishop had visited the island within living memory, the spiritual wants of the few Catholic families living there being attended to by a French priest, who came over once or twice a year. Many of the French laity who had been there some little time had been entirely without the consolations of religion. Here then was full scope for Carron's activity. Three churches were opened by him, in conjunction with others, at St. Helier's, where he preached numerous sermons and retreats for the refugees. Two other churches were also built in other parts of the island. An aged Sulpician, M. Goufury, also organised theological con-

[1] It appears that the Bishop of Coutances, the nearest French see, claimed and even exercised jurisdiction. Plasse (i., p. 333) seems to assume that he was the Ordinary of the Channel Islands. This, however, was not so. The Rev. R. Smelt says emphatically in one of his letters that the Holy See had never given any French bishop jurisdiction in British territory, and that the Channel Islands were subject to the Vicar Apostolic of the London District. In the briefs of the vicars apostolic from Challoner's time onward these islands are mentioned by name.

ferences for priests. Amongst other works established, chiefly by the activity of Carron, may be enumerated an institution for the sick, an orphanage, a lending library and several schools. The means for these pious works were supplied partly by the *émigrés* themselves, for some of those who took refuge in Jersey had saved a large proportion of their money; but partly also by the assistance of the people of Jersey, who, Protestants though they were, realised the charity of the work going on in their midst. A certain amount of help was likewise sent by the Bishop of St. Pol de Léon from the funds of the London Committee; but as time went on, and the Committee became straitened in their resources, this source of supply came to an end.

The exiled priests were not allowed to remain permanently in Jersey: during the years 1795 and 1796 there was an apprehension of the island being taken possession of by the French, and the priests were transferred to England. Carron came in the latter year, reaching London in the month of August. Here he found plenty of work ready to his hand. He reopened his schools, and established catechism classes as before. In order to provide for the older clergy, he hired a house in Tottenham Place, a small street leading out of Tottenham Court Road, where he established a home in which those who were superannuated might end their days in peace. With a view to providing a succession of French clergy for the future needs of the Church in that country, he opened a seminary in which twenty-five students were educated for the Church. He likewise maintained a boarding school for eighty boys, and another for sixty girls, in addition to his poor schools at Somers Town. In Conway Street, Fitzroy Square, he also opened a chapel, adjacent to which was a "Providence," where soup and provisions were gratuitously distributed to any French exiles who were in need.

In order to keep so many good works going, it is evident that large funds were needed. Carron had an extraordinary gift for obtaining money. His many friends, both Catholic and Protestant, subscribed continuously to his works. Several remarkable stories are told of the manner in which he obtained assistance when all human means seemed exhausted. On one occasion, a stranger passed, dropping in front of Carron, either

The Abbé Guy Toussaint Carron.

by accident or on purpose, a large envelope. Carron called after him, but he took no notice and quickly disappeared down another street; and the envelope was found filled with bank notes, amounting to a large sum, which Carron quickly applied to his various charities. His work among the poor earned him the respect of the most bigoted Protestants, who used to be quoted as stating a syllogism, "Abbé Carron is a Popish priest; but Abbé Carron is a good man; therefore some Popish priests are good men". The following account given by Dr. Douglass gives a vivid picture of Carron's work in the midst of his little flock, in a manner characteristically French:—

"1799. April 21. On this day I sang Mass at the French Chapel in London Street,[1] and gave first Communion to a number of Monsieur Carron's scholars. He made a short discourse to the children after the Ciborium was taken out and placed on the altar. I was gone to the Fauteuil, and two girls and two boys were called by him (after he had finished) into the sanctuary. These made after each other their address and prayer to our Lord. Then I gave the Communion to them all. After the Communion Mr. Carron made them an exhortation (on their happiness, obligation of a good life). I then proceeded to the altar, and finished the Mass. The addresses of the children were very affecting: the whole chapel appeared to be moved to tears. In the afternoon I sang Vespers. Two of the said children renewed their Baptismal vows (Mr. Carron made apposite discourses before and after). I received their renovation, sitting before the altar, with the mass book open upon my knees, which they after renewing &c. in the name of all, *viz.* a boy for the boys, and a girl for the girls, put their hands upon the Gospel and kissed it. After which I confirmed them. After solemn Benediction, sang the Te Deum."

[1] This is the same church which is elsewhere described as Conway Street, Fitzroy Square. The priest's house opened into London Street.

CHAPTER XXIX.

EVENTS IN ROME. FALL OF THE ENGLISH COLLEGE.

1795-1799.

In order to complete the account of the losses suffered by the English Mission during the last decade of the eighteenth century, we must now give a brief description of the events in Rome, and the fall of the English College, which was sequestrated by the French when they occupied the city in 1798. These events had not been entirely unexpected; but they came in the end with some suddenness, and amidst circumstances which affected the whole Church. They could not but fill the minds of all thinking Catholics with grave apprehension for the future, and for the time these almost overshadowed the particular loss suffered by the English Mission.

The fall of the college at this particular time was all the more disappointing, since after long years of agitation the vicars apostolic had at last succeeded in securing the appointment of English superiors, so that it seemed as if a future was about to open out to the college of increased usefulness to the English Mission. From the time when Rev. Robert Smelt went to Rome, he worked hard, as Mgr. Stonor had done before him, to secure this end. On examining the bull of foundation, however, he found to his surprise that it contained a definite provision that the rector should be an Italian. This was the more surprising, as the Jesuits, during the two centuries of their rule, had nearly always had an English rector. Mr. Smelt comments on this, in a letter to Bishop Douglass, attributing it, at least in later times, to the influence of "King James" during his residence in Rome. While admitting that the bull was a difficulty, he thought that it was not an insuperable one, and that it might be got over in the future as it had been in the past.

Early in the year 1795 one of the chief obstacles to this end was removed by the death of Cardinal Corsini, which took place after a week's illness on January 18 of that year. His successor as protector of the college was Cardinal Campanelli, who was just recovering from a dangerous illness. He was appointed by the Pope mainly through the personal influence of Sir John Cox Hippisley, then in Rome. A strong combination was now formed. By his intimacy with Mgr. Erskine, Campanelli was considered to be *au courant* with English Catholic affairs, while Hippisley, as a member of Parliament, was supposed to be in touch with the British Government. All three of them used their influence in favour of the appointment of national superiors. Sir John Cox Hippisley, though not himself a Catholic, was always friendly to the body, and in this instance he was specially anxious to further their wishes. He drew up a case in favour of appointing an English rector, which filled many sheets of close writing, and was said to have made a great impression on the Pope; while strange to say, after the death of Corsini, the Italian rector declared himself on that side, and gave Sir John every assistance in setting out his case.

Unfortunately, however, just when success seemed secured, before Campanelli had occupied his new post many days, he had a relapse, and his illness terminated fatally on February 18. This untoward event dissolved the combination. Mgr. Erskine's influence practically ceased, and matters reverted almost to their former state.

The new Protector was Cardinal Braschi, a nephew of the Pope, who though a member of the Sacred College, and therefore necessarily a tonsured cleric, had not received even Minor Orders. He took formal possession on March 2, with considerable pomp and ceremony; but after that he was rarely seen at the college. He was a comparatively young man—only just over forty—and was believed to refer every point of importance to his uncle. About the same time, Cardinal Antonelli resigned his position as Prefect of Propaganda, and was succeeded by Cardinal Gerdil, a Savoyard, already seventy-seven years old. He belonged to the Barnabite Congregation, and was reputed to be one of the most learned men in Italy. A few weeks later, the aged Mgr. Stonor, after a residence

of forty-seven years in the Eternal City, peacefully breathed his last.

Thus it came about that when the question of appointing national superiors over the English College came to be discussed again, there was an almost completely new *personnel.* The Pope referred the matter to Cardinal Gerdil for his advice; but in reality the determining factor was the memorial of Sir John Cox Hippisley, although he himself had left Rome before the decision was come to. Mr. Smelt says that he left behind many enemies, but at least one friend in Pius VI. The Pope remembered what he owed to the English in his time of difficulty, and this, added to the inherent strength of the arguments used, at length prevailed over Italian prejudice, and it was conceded that the next time the office was vacant, an Englishman should be appointed. The opportunity might have been taken in 1796 when the Italian rector resigned; but his resignation was not at that time accepted. The following year he resigned a second time, having on this occasion first consulted with the Cardinal Duke of York, by whose express wish, the resignation was accepted. The English bishops were then called upon to suggest names for his successor.

At this stage a conflict of interests arose. The Rev. Robert Smelt, who by his long efforts had had a considerable share in bringing about the result, hoped to be appointed first English rector. He put forward his claim without hesitation in a letter to Bishop Douglass under date July 22, 1797:—[1]

"After all the trouble and expenses I have been at pursuing this business," he wrote, "it is doubtful whether I shall enjoy the fruit of my labour. I have sown the ground, but another will reap the crop. It is objected to me that being agent of the mission, I ought not to be Rector, lest hereafter another agent might consider himself entitled to it *jure officii*, which would intrench on the prerogative of the Cardinal Protector, by transferring the nomination of the Rector to the Vicars-Apostolic who appoint the agent. . . . This business has cost me much labour, anxiety of mind as well as money, to bring it into even its present shape. I shall therefore have reason to think myself ill-used in case I have not the refusal of

[1] This and the following letters of Mr. Smelt are all among the Westminster Archives.

the place. I was educated in the College, served eighteen years in the mission, since then have spent eight years at Rome, in management of temporal concerns. My name has been frequently mentioned in letters to you in a handsome manner by Antonelli and Gerdil: the latter told me I was the person he fixed on for the office. These reasons, with whatever else you may think proper to say, will operate powerfully towards removing this wonderful objection, as you will disclaim any authority of nomination; you only recommend at the request of the Cardinal Protector.

"It will be an unpleasant employment to any one," he adds "but in particular to a stranger not conversant with the manners and customs of the country. His conduct will be narrowly watched, many stumbling blocks thrown in his way, which may cause mismanagement, and eventually be the means of once more taking the house again out of our hands, as incapable of conducting it."

Again at the end of his letter, he returns to the same subject:—

"A few lines to Antonelli and Gerdil reminding them of what they wrote of me will be of service. These may be sent under cover to me. The late Messrs. Talbot and Matthew Gibson repeatedly told me they had fixed on me in case the College could ever be recovered. I was sent out with such a promise: this may be brought into the Cardinal's letter. . . . This affair is at present a secret there, but must be known before your answer can return. Ill designing people will have time to form plans to counteract us; therefore no other person should be joined in the recommendation with me, as it may give them an advantage."

The official notification here alluded to did not reach London till the end of the year. It was sent to Mgr. Erskine, and by him delivered to Bishop Douglass on December 20, 1797. Mgr. Erskine, to whom Mr. Smelt was not a *persona grata*, petitioned for Dr. Gregory Stapleton, who in his former visit to Rome had created a very favourable impression. He was at this time president of St Edmund's College and in addition still nominally president of the English College at St. Omer, so that his presence might be at any time called for in order to reclaim the property there in the event of a peace being con-

cluded between England and France. Nevertheless, Dr. Stapleton seemed ready to face these difficulties, and had he been formally elected, he would have been willing to accept the office. As to whether he would have been chosen, or whether Mr. Smelt would have secured the position he so wished for, we can only conjecture, for early in the new year the development of political affairs in Rome put an end to the whole scheme.

During the greater part of 1796 the Romans were in a state of alarm. It was the year of the invasion of Italy by Bonaparte, and according to Mr. Smelt, he had promised his men the plunder of Rome in revenge for the death of one of the secretaries of the legation, by name Basseville, who had been murdered by the populace in January, 1793. In the event, the French troops did not reach Rome that year, and the signature of the Treaty of Peace between Napoleon and the Papacy at Tolentino in February, 1797, though in terms very unfavourable to the latter, seemed to promise a more peaceful outlook in the Eternal City.

During the time that the invading army overran the Papal States, and Rome itself seemed threatened, a series of strange events took place throughout Italy which were commonly believed by Catholics to be miraculous. The first and chief manifestation of the kind happened at Ancona on June 25, 1796, when a celebrated picture of the Madonna was seen to open and shut its eyes. Similar prodigies were reported in other parts of Italy, especially in Rome itself. The ardent and excitable Italian nature asserted itself, as it always does under like circumstances, and responded with an immense outburst of devotion.

One of the best known of these "Miraculous Madonnas" was at the country house of the English College at Monte Porzio, where the picture can still be seen at the present day, and is venerated under the title of "Mater Sanctæ Spei". The following incident relating to it is quoted from a letter from the Rev. Robert Smelt to the Rev. Thomas Horrabin, of Virginia Street Chapel, dated October 15, 1796, at which time the students would have been passing the summer vacation at Monte Porzio:—

"The Rector of our College placed a Madonna against the

wall of the house at Monte Porzio. This picture opened its eyes, and became an object of great [devotion] amongst the country people, who soon hung up a great number of knives and other offensive weapons. The Rector, much pleased with all this, prepared a fine canopy and other ornaments, but the Cardinal of York ordered the curate to take it into the parish church. The Rector remonstrated, producing the bull of foundation, which exempts the College and all belonging to it from ordinary jurisdiction, but the Cardinal, who is both Bishop and King, sent peremptory orders to the Curate to obey his mandate. Much altercation ensued between Rector and Curate, who was forbid to come near the house, and threatened unless the picture was returned to its primitive situation by the month of October, he would carry the boys in a body to the church, and take it away by force. King Henry IX., who is as despotic a monarch as his ancestor Henry VIII., and full as impatient of contradiction, was violently enraged at the Rector, and now abuses him like a pick-pocket."

It would be out of place here to enter on a discussion of the evidence on which the truth of these manifestations was believed by many. There is of course nothing impossible in that class of miracle, though we might be less ready to believe in it now than Catholics were a century ago. Nevertheless, the number of responsible persons who saw and testified to the phenomena is a fact which cannot be too easily set aside. Moreover, it must be carefully borne in mind that the miracles were only alleged during a short space of time—a few days, or at most, weeks: had they been the result of imagination, we may well ask why they should have so speedily come to an end.

Still, it need hardly be said that it was a matter on which each individual Catholic could either give or withhold his belief. It need not surprise us to find that Joseph Berington adopted the latter course. Nevertheless, the sneering tone adopted by him in his pamphlet, which he entitled *An Examination of Events termed Miraculous, as reported in Letters from Italy*, coming from a Catholic priest, was extremely bad taste, to say nothing worse. Nor was he in truth in any way qualified to pass judgment, as he does so freely, on occurrences many hundreds of miles away, which he only learnt of at second hand. He was answered by his neighbour, Rev. George

Bruning, chaplain to the Barratts at Milton, and certainly the sympathy of English Catholics in general was on the side of the latter. Milner also dealt with the subject in a pamphlet which he entitled *A Serious Expostulation with Rev. Joseph Berington.*

One argument often used in support of the genuineness of the miracles was that the "phlegmatic Mr. Smelt" believed in them. His sentiments are expressed in a letter to the Rev. T. Horrabin, so that we are fortunately able to give them at first hand. Referring to two students of the English College, Messrs. Harris and Porter, who had recently been ordained and returned to England, he says:—

"[They] will be able to give an account of the prodigies which have happened in different parts of Rome, where they first appeared on Saturday, July ye 2nd, and they only departed ye 16th of ye same. If I am not mistaken, something of the kind happened whilst they were at Civita Vecchia. For my own part, I thought I saw one of these pictures of the Madonna open and shut its eyes on that same Saturday morning, but couldn't assert it for a certainty. The picture was covered with a glass and some candles burning before it, as well as the sun shining upon it, a great mob of people shouting and singing. These miracles were first seen at Ancona and two or three other places in the same province. That of Ancona is attested juridically by the Bishop, but none of the others. I think these signs continued at times about three weeks. After all, *quidam credebant, quidam vero non credebant.* The incredulous considered it only as a manœuvre of the Spanish minister and his party to amuse the people whilst they were selling Rome to the French. Be that as it may, a wonderful good effect ensued among the people, who made a voluntary oblation of prohibited arms which they carry about with them, and are but too apt to make use of in their quarrels when they stab and frequently murder each other. These weapons, such as pistols, knives, stilettos were hung up about the miraculous pictures, and they still continue garnished with the same.

"The Government, seeing the people so well disposed, employed six popular preachers, who assembled people in six large squares every evening during ten days; then they walked in procession to some conspicuous church for three days,

afterwards preaching with the Benediction during three more. These processions were so numerous that they were some hours passing by. The Cross was carried before the men by a Cardinal; the women followed having a Princess at their head, carrying a picture of the Madonna. It was computed that in one of these processions thirty thousand men walked, and twenty thousand women, many of both sex barefoot. All this contributed much to bring the people into good order: during all this time not one murder was committed, neither was any wounded person sent to the hospital. But it seems all the knives were not given to the Madonna, or others have been procured, for both stabbing and murdering are come into fashion again. A man was wounded close to my door, and another killed at a short distance.

"Several new pictures of the Madonna have been put up by devout persons, who keep lamps burning before them every night. Old pictures which were neglected are now repaired, and lamps burn before them at the expense of the neighbours, which is of great use in a city where no public lights are maintained."

It will be seen that in pronouncing on the truth of the alleged miracles, Mr. Smelt, though inclined to believe in them, is nevertheless somewhat guarded; and we learn from Dr. Douglass's Diary that Messrs Porter and Harris on their arrival declared that they had not seen anything which they could definitely assert to be miraculous.

The state of Rome continued comparatively quiet from the time of the signature of the Treaty of Tolentino until the following December (1797), when during an attempted revolution, a French General was killed just outside the Embassy. This gave the French the excuse which they wanted. The Ambassador left Rome early the following day, and General Berthier was ordered to march upon the city. The story can be told from the correspondence of Rev. Robert Smelt:—

REV. ROBERT SMELT TO BISHOP DOUGLASS.

"*December* 30, 1797.

"A Revolution was attempted on Thursday night. A considerable body of people, armed, and cockades in their hats, appeared in different parts of the city. They were opposed by

the regular troops and civic guard. The reason assigned was the scarcity of oil and other necessaries of life. Many people were killed. The heat of action was near the French Ambassador's palace, where a great number had taken refuge. Here a French General was killed, and the Ambassador himself narrowly escaped. He left Rome as soon as possible, with all his family. The Cisalpine army is in full march towards Rome, which will probably be given up to plunder in revenge for the insult offered to the Republic. Our students narrowly escaped, for an affray happened near the College as they were returning home in the afternoon. The balls whistled about their ears, but they got safe in. I am at a loss to know what to do. I don't wish to leave our concerns behind, yet if I remain, I fear that my life is in danger: may the Lord direct me for the best. The few English here are getting away as fast as possible. The Pope is still alive, but that's all. I'll write again next Saturday, if alive, in the meantime recommend myself to your good prayers."

The incidents here recorded produced as before a revulsion of feeling among the people, which is described in the following letter:—

REV. ROBERT SMELT TO BISHOP DOUGLASS.

"*January* 21, 1798.

". . . The people are now full of piety and devotion. Tuesday morning, ye 16th, an order was issued from the Cardinal Vicar of Rome commanding Wednesday ye 17th to be observed as a fast by all the clergy: to the laity it was only recommended. Every bell in Rome, large or small, and there are upwards of three thousand, was ordered to be rang from five to six on Tuesday evening, during which time three ancient monuments of Christianity, considered here as sacred and miraculous, were transported from the places where they are preserved to St. Peter's church, to be there exposed on the high altar under the dome for eight days. I must observe they were not carried straight to St. Peter's that night, but deposited in a certain church called Santa Maria in Vallicella, otherwise usually known by the name of the Chiesa Nuova. They consist of a picture of our Saviour called 'Il Santissimo Salvatore,' the very same that was first to be exposed to the public

view when St. Sylvester consecrated the church of St. John Lateran as related in ye Breviary Nov. ye 9th. This picture is preserved in a certain chapel near the above mentioned church, called 'Sanctum Sanctorum,' at the top of the Holy Stairs. It was never brought out except in the great calamities of the Church; the last time was in 1709, and before that in 1683, when the Turks besieged Vienna. The next is a picture of the Madonna discovered in the fifth century, and preserved in the Church of Santa Maria in Campitelli. The last time this picture was brought out was in 1716, when the Turks besieged the city of Corfu, in the Adriatic Sea. The third is the Chain of St. Peter, kept in the church of St. Peter in Vinculis, as described in ye Breviary August ye 1st. On Wednesday morning all the bells above mentioned began to ring at 10 and continued till 12, during which time all the clergy in Rome, secular and regular, Prelates, Bishops and Cardinals walked in procession from the said Church of St. Peter's, the length of ground being about one mile and half. At the end of the procession these sacred monuments were carried. The Pope was not able to attend, but viewed the procession from a window of the Vatican Palace. Although the orders for this procession were only published 24 hours before, to prevent people coming from the adjacent country, nevertheless they soon heard of it, and the roads to Rome were crowded with people during the whole night. All these people, united with the inhabitants of Rome, lined the streets through which the procession passed, or followed behind, some praying, others singing as their devotion inspired them. So great a crowd must by necessity move very slow. Those who arrived early at St. Peter's were returning whilst others were moving forward, at least endeavouring to do so, for it was scarce possible to move ten yards in as many minutes; nevertheless, no accident happened. I returned from St. Peter's Church with this immense crowd; a more orderly set of people I never saw. Men, women and children were attentive to their prayers, bearing patiently the inconvenience of a rainy day and dirty streets without the least murmuring. Each one sang or said such prayers as he thought proper, which added to the sound of three thousand bells, caused great discord, so that the confusion of tongues at the Tower of Babel may be considered as

a mere trifle compared with the confusion of this day. Such is the devotion of the people that the streets leading to St. Peter's are crowded from morning till night. The country people come whole parishes together, firmly persuaded Almighty God will hear their prayers, and not suffer either French or Cisalpines to approach near the Holy City. The picture of our Saviour was never yet exposed to public view but the petitions of the Roman people were granted. Both French and Cisalpine army are marching forward, so that unless Almighty God shows His power by a miracle, the city must fall into their hands."

Mr. Smelt's forebodings of evil were not long in being realised. Under date February 10, 1798, 4 P.M. he writes:—

"I have only time to inform you that General Berthier took possession of the Castle of St. Angelo this morning at 10 o'clock. Part of his army is in the town, the remainder encamped four miles distant. All quiet at present. The Pope is still here at the Vatican, with some Cardinals and a considerable part of the nobility."

A week later he gave Bishop Douglass a full description of the march of events:—

"ROME, *Feb.* 17th, 1798.

"RT. REV. SIR,

"Saturday last, ye 10th inst., I wrote a few lines in great haste and confusion, to inform you of what had happened that day. Those few lines were not worth postage, but I wished you to have as early intelligence as an other person;[1] moreover, I had not time to write more, and it was impossible to collect any further authentic information at that late hour of the day. . . . I sent a long letter on January 27, containing among other things, an account of two processions, the first to St. Peter's by daylight, the second by night to St. Mary Major's, attended by some thousand wax torches, the voluntary contributions of pious people out of devotion to the picture of the 'Santissimo Salvatore,' the Madonna and St. Peter's Chain. A third procession was made on Septuagesima Sunday the 4th inst. from St. Mary Major's to St. John Lateran's in the morning. The way is in a direct line, as you will see on your

[1] Presumably Mgr. Erskine.

plan of Rome. It was a warm, pleasant day; altogether it was the finest procession I ever beheld: so much for religious processions.

"The following Sunday, Sexagesima, we were entertained with a procession of a different nature: a considerable part of the French army marched into Rome by the Porta del Popolo. Instead of a cross, we saw the Tree of Liberty erected within the Gate; and instead of *Ora pro nobis*, our ears were charmed with the delightful sound of *Viva la Libertà.* Another Tree was planted in Piazza di Spagna, under which an orator held forth a considerable time in praise of liberty; but it did not appear to me, who was present, that he gained many proselytes, if I may judge from the applause he received; both these Trees were erected without the knowledge of General Berthier; in consequence three French and five Italians were arrested and condemned to be shot the next morning; but I don't hear whether it was put in execution. I mentioned the French army having taken possession of the Castle of St. Angelo on Saturday. Sunday morning they marched up to the Capitol; St. Peter's in Montorio; Monte Mario; Monte Cavallo; and took possession of all the city Gates. The great Franciscan Convent of Ara Cœli, near the Capitol, containing more than three hundred Friars, some other convents, together with the Pope's summer Palace at Monte Cavallo, where his family resides, were all cleared out in four hours, to receive the soldiers. The inhabitants of the palace were able to pay porters, carts and horses to carry away their effects, but the poor Friars were forced to bear their own burdens: it was a melancholy sight to see those poor men, each with his burden on his back. The Roman College was assigned for their reception, but it already contained 150 persons, so that little room was left for the Friars, who were received into the houses of charitable people: otherwise they might have remained in the streets. The general Officers are lodged in the palaces of the nobility, each one attended by a certain number of soldiers, others in the houses of the better sort of people, from four to twelve in a house. Proclamations are published in the General's name; yet the old Government still goes on in a certain degree. Tuesday morning all the Pope's soldiers were disbanded, except the Civic Guard, who patrol the streets and keep order in the town. The same day

the conditions required by way of satisfaction for the General's death were published; you'll see them in the newspaper. One is to send a Cardinal, a Prelate and Duke Braschi to Paris, to ask pardon; another condition six millions of crowns, four in money, two in cattle and corn, the army to be maintained during its stay: these conditions in the present miserable state of the country must inevitably cause ruin and desolation; a famine will certainly ensue. The Pope and most of the Cardinals are in the city. The Cardinal of York is at Gaeta; Braschi at Naples. Mr. Waters[1] took to his heels last Saturday night, is gone to the confines of Naples, sixty miles distant. Cl. Albani flew away; he was obnoxious, being considered the chief promoter of the war last year. However, his palace is sequestered, but I apprehend little will be found, for he is supposed to be one hundred thousand crowns worse than nothing. If he never returns, it will be no great matter.

"General Berthier has taken eight hostages, who are placed under a guard in the Quirinal; one of them is in the Auditor's apartment, whose substitute was forced to clear out at four hours' warning: they are composed of four Cardinals, two Prelates and two Princes. One of the Prelates is Brancadoro. . . . Thursday the Tree of Liberty was erected at the Capitol. The General read a paper declaring Rome an independent Republic. The Arms of the Pope are taken down from every place. The Municipality is composed of five persons, called Consuls, two of them were Prelates, eminent Advocates—Riganti and Constantini. All distinctions are abolished, no more Princes, Cardinals or Prelates, all equal, all citizens; no more livery servants.

". . . Your obedt. humble servant,

"ROBERT SMELT."

THE SAME TO THE SAME.

"*March* 2, 1798.

". . . The Old Man left the city on Shrove Tuesday,[2] arrived safe at Sienna, where he will stay a few days, and then proceed to Pisa, which is to be his residence. Ours and the Scots' College were sequestered in the name of the

[1] Rev. J. P. Waters, O.S.B., the "procurator in curia" of the English Benedictine Congregation.

[2] This is a slight error: the Pope left Rome very early on Ash Wednesday.

French Republic Friday last, ye 23rd: however, it is not yet decided whether they will be considered as English property or Roman, having been founded and endowed by former Popes. The boys are preparing to depart, and I hope their expenses will be paid. . . . All priests, secular and regular, not born in the Roman Republic, were ordered yesterday to give in their names, employment, &c. Suppose we are to be sent away. In the meantime I am preparing to march, propose going into Tuscany, where I shall consider what course to steer. . . ."

THE SAME TO THE SAME.

"FLORENCE, *March* ye 15th, 1798.

"RT. REV. SIR,

"The date of this letter shows that I am safe in a Christian country. I left Rome, Wednesday, ye 7th, at 2 o'clock in the afternoon, reached the confines of Tuscany Saturday morning; and arrived here Monday afternoon. The distance is 190 miles. . . . It is impossible to quit Rome without a passport from the Municipality, which must be afterwards signed by the French General as military Governor of Rome. Some objection was made against me by this last mentioned, as being an Englishman. I went directly to General d'Allemagne, Commander-in-chief, who gave me an order in writing for the Governor to sign the Passport, so I quitted Rome with flying colours. At the time of my departure, forty-five thousand passports had been issued; so great is the number of emigrants that carriages are scarce to be had for money, the Inns on the road crowded with travellers, many are compelled to remain in open air, without meat or drink. Such another unpleasant journey I never want, and trust never shall have again. . . . I am greatly deranged, both in body and mind, and what is still worse, my heart almost broke with grief."

A little later Mr. Smelt added:—

"Notwithstanding that I have long foreseen, even foretold, a Revolution at Rome, yet it afflicts me to such a degree that I shall never recover it, because I never supposed it could be brought about in the manner it was: but God's will be done."

Mr. Smelt took refuge at Pugnano, near Pisa, where Lady Mary Eyre, sister of Lord Fauconberg, had a villa, to which she

invited him. He had stayed there upon previous occasions, and she had begged of him always to look upon her house as a shelter in which to take refuge in the event of untoward circumstances. Here he remained for many months. From time to time he would receive news of the state of Rome by correspondence, and he duly reported it to England. A few extracts from his letters will give a vivid description of the state of affairs there.

REV. ROBERT SMELT TO BISHOP DOUGLASS.

"PUGNANO, *April* 3, 1798.

". . . Rome [is] by this time nearly reduced to half its ancient population, the inhabitants in distress and misery, famine staring them full in the face, money so scarce that a piece of silver coin of any country or denomination sells for six times its value in paper. Tradesmen shut up their shops to avoid selling their goods in return for paper money, but were compelled to open them again under pain of being considered bad citizens, and treated as such. The nobility and others possessing property forced to remain under pain of losing it, their palaces full of officers and soldiers, whom they are forced to maintain in an elegant style, their horses seized and sent away, themselves forced to walk on foot, enormous contributions demanded of them—cloth, leather, linen, hats, as well as every other article necessary for clothing, the army put in a state of requisition, the inhabitants at large invited to contribute their money for the same purpose, at the same time informed if they don't contribute voluntarily, they will be compelled by force; but what is more extraordinary, the clergy now reduced to poverty are invited by a particular edict to contribute towards this good work. What Jeremiah foretold at Jerusalem is now verified at Rome, *Quomodo sedet sola civitas*, &c. which the poor people of that devoted city will hear sung tomorrow evening[1] with tears in their eyes. . . ."

Three weeks later, Mr. Smelt gave further details, including this time some news about the fate of the English College. The students had received passports and set out for England in charge of Rev. P. MacPherson on March 31, as stated in a previous chapter. The rector remained in charge of the building.

[1] At *Tenebrae*, on Wednesday in Holy Week.

The Same to the Same.

"Pisa, *April* 30, 1798.

". . . At Rome things go daily from bad to worse; only two Cardinals remain, Rezzonico, a Venetian, too infirm to be removed, and Altieri, a Roman, who lives with his brother, a cy-devant prince. Only a few Prelates, by birth Romans, who have all laid aside the purple dress, even such as are not in Holy Orders, have secularised themselves and taken to some other trade. . . . The old Calabrian Rector of the Scots was imprisoned during six days, when banished from the Republic. . . . I lately received a letter from the ex-Rector of our cy-devant College. He tells me part of the movables are sold, but scarce any person offers to purchase the lands, unless at so low a price that the French Commissaire won't take. He continues in the house with the masters and servants in hopes of some gratification for past service, but with slender hopes of success. In the meantime the income is stopped and the furniture daily selling off, hence they will soon be deprived of bed and board, which may be considered the same as starving them out of possession, such is Republican warning. I have desired a person at Rome to purchase the Archivium of the College, another, who understands English, is to examine and separate what regards our concerns from papers of no value. The ex-Rector promised to secure for me the book containing an account of all the students since its foundation."

On August 14 he wrote further:—

"Only a small part of our College lands are sold, the house is let out to various people in lodgings. The Scots' College the same. Most part of the friars remaining in Rome have thrown aside their frocks and put on secular apparel. The secular priests have done the same as to habit and tonsure."

When the Pope left Rome, he was taken under escort of 100 French troops through Viterbo, to the confines of Tuscany; from thence a detachment of Tuscan soldiers took charge of him, and conducted him to Siena, where he was confined in the Augustinian monastery. Three months later, this being considered too near the Papal States, he was removed to the

Carthusian monastery outside Florence, where he remained for over nine months.

In the meanwhile, Cardinal Gerdil took refuge in a monastery at Turin. For a time Mr. Smelt tried to arrange the more pressing business of the English mission by coming from Pugnano to Florence—some fifty miles—and approaching the Holy Father himself. After the death of Bishop Berington, on June 8, it became of importance to obtain the appointment of a successor. Mr. Smelt wrote to Mgr. Odeschalchi, the nuncio at Florence, who undertook to help him; but the Pope was unwilling to act without consulting Cardinal Gerdil or Cardinal Borgia, who were both so many miles away as to render it a long matter in the troubled state of the country to communicate with them.

In the month of March, 1799, owing to various political reasons, it was determined to remove the Pope to France. Before setting out, he gave full faculties to Cardinal Borgia, who was residing at Padua, as Pro-Prefect of Propaganda, with Mgr. (afterwards Cardinal) Brancadoro as Secretary. The aged Pontiff was carried on a litter across the pass of Mount Cenis, at the end of April, at which season there is always deep snow on the summit. He was taken first to Briançon, from whence he was conveyed in a carriage to Grenoble, where he arrived on May 6. He was received by the people with enthusiasm. "The newspapers of this week," writes Dr. Douglass, "relate that when the Pope was on the road from Briançon to Grenoble, escorted by 20 dragoons, two thousand peasants (plus minus) of Dauphiné assembled around his carriage, fell on their knees, begged his blessing, and requested of his Holiness leave to procure a litter for him, as the carriage he was in was dirty and unworthy of him. They procured a litter, (the dragoons did not oppose these proceedings,) and they carried him on their shoulders (relieving each other). On their approach to Grenoble, they despatched a messenger to announce the arrival of his Holiness, and the inhabitants received him with acclamation, and every demonstration of respect."

After a stay of a little more than three weeks, the Pope was again removed, and taken to Valence on the Rhone. This was his last earthly journey. On August 18 he was taken ill,

and day by day became gradually worse. On the 27th, Mgr. Spina, Archbishop of Corinth, who had accompanied him throughout, administered the last Sacraments, and early in the morning of the 29th, Giovanni Angelo Braschi, known in the Papacy as Pope Pius VI., breathed his last.

CHAPTER XXX.

POLITICAL EVENTS AT THE CLOSE OF THE EIGHTEENTH CENTURY.

1799-1800.

THE fall of the English College at Rome, and the generally threatening state of Southern Europe made it the more necessary to proceed with the work in hand at Old Hall as quickly as possible. "All haste consistent with reason must be made in getting the building up," wrote Dr. Douglass, "for at Rome all our property is confiscated already, and at Lisbon and Valladolid, how long shall we have Colleges?"

The building at St. Edmund's had taken much longer to complete than had been anticipated. This was due to a troublesome Chancery suit in connection with the legacy of Mr. Sone already alluded to, which caused a cessation of building operations for nearly two years. The case was eventually decided in favour of Dr. Douglass and building was resumed. Before the end of the year 1798 the college was roofed in; but as is often the case, the concluding stages took an unexpectedly long time, and when Dr. Douglass paid a visit in the summer of 1799, the new building was still unoccupied. He was accompanied by Dr. Moylan, the well-known Bishop of Cork, who had come to London to treat with the Government on the proposed legislative union between Great Britain and Ireland, then under discussion, and took the opportunity to see St. Edmund's. Notwithstanding its unfinished state, we read in Dr. Douglass's Diary that "he expressed much pleasure at the sight of the College, and examining all the conveniences of playgrounds, farmyard, farm, &c., relative situation of College and Seminary,[1] or of the great

[1] The word "Seminary" is used here for the Preparatory School, which was carried on for many years at Old Hall in the "Old College," as it was called. This use of the term Seminary is still current at Ushaw.

St. Edmund's College, Old Hall
(Early Nineteenth Century).

and small school, he wished Maynooth had the same advantages". On September 9, Dr. Douglass paid a second visit to Old Hall, and remained a month, during which time the formal opening of the new College took place, the date of which was Michaelmas Day, September 29, 1799.

Immediately on his return to London, the first news reached Dr. Douglass of the death of the Pope: but it was not until October 16 that Mgr. Erskine called to inform him officially. On the 17th a solemn Dirge and Requiem were sung at the Portuguese Chapel for the repose of His Holiness's soul, Bishop Douglass being the celebrant. Four days later again, a similar service was held at Lincoln's Inn Fields. The following month a function more elaborate than either took place at St. Patrick's, Soho, organised by Mgr. Erskine, and carried out at his expense. For many reasons, political and other, he was anxious to identify himself as closely as possible with the Roman Curia, and this was an opportunity for emphasising his position. He wished to have the function carried out on a scale which England had not seen since Catholic days. The celebrant was of course Bishop Douglass, and the preacher Father O'Leary. His sermon was afterwards published, together with a description of the ceremony in language which appears quaint to modern ears. The church is styled an "elegant and capacious structure," and a full description is given of the "decorations," which is sufficiently characteristic to be worth quoting:—[1]

"At the porticoes or entrances," the author writes, "mutes were stationed, habited in their usual mourning costume, with black staves in their hands. The whole interior of the walls, from the ceiling to the ground floor, was hung with black cloth; against which were affixed numerous plated reflectors with wax lights, the centre of the intermediate space between each reflector being occupied with the arms of the Sovereign Pontiff, *viz.*, the Tiara and Cross Keys, painted on a blue ground, with a black margin, edged with gold. The columns which support the galleries were also connected with festoons of black drapery, having plated reflectors, with wax tapers over each column; whilst shields, with appropriate Scriptural texts,

[1] P. 4.

and escutcheons, with emblems suitable to the Pontifical office, occupied the intervening space, formed a contrast with the sable appearance of the walls, at once both splendid and awful.

"The pulpit, the altar steps, the floors of the sanctuary and body of the Chapel were also clothed in a sable livery; and in the centre was erected a magnificent Sarcophagus, Mausoleum or Tomb, supposed to contain the remains of the Holy Pontiff. It consisted of a platform, to which there was a gradual ascent of several steps, from the ground floor, the sides whereof were parallel to those of the Chapel, on the top of which was laid an oblong tomb, whose ends were ornamented with similar Pontifical escutcheons and armorial bearings to those already described; and on each side a white satin tablet, containing an inscription in Latin, of which the following is a translation:—

"'To the Sovereign Pontiff Pius the Sixth, who from the hatred of his enemies to the Christian Religion, was led captive into France, and died at Valence the 29th of August, 1799'.

"On the tomb was laid a velvet cushion, superbly embroidered with gold, supporting a splendid model of the Tiara, or Papal Triple Crown, covered by a canopy elevated about twenty feet, and forming an obtuse angle at the top, on which were placed nine superb plumes of Ostrich feathers, rising in a pyramidical order, from the lower to the uppermost part of the roof.

"The canopy was supported by four columns, with stripes of black and white, twining alternately in a serpentine manner around their shafts, and connected at top by festoons of black drapery, the steps at their bases being brilliantly illuminated by torches of white wax, in massy chandeliers, intermixed with large plumes of white Ostrich feathers."

After Mass, the full number of five "Absolutions" were given by the Bishops of Montpellier, Rhodez, Lombez, Waterford, and the celebrant, Bishop Douglass. Besides these, there were present on the sanctuary the Bishop of St. Pol de Léon and the Archbishop of Narbonne, Dr. Dillon, a member of an old Irish family; and of course Mgr. Erskine himself. The foreign ministers attended, and occupied the "Tribune" on the Gospel side; the galleries were reserved for those who had

tickets; the general public being admitted to the "Body of the Church," or such part of it as was not occupied by the catafalque. The whole service lasted from 10 o'clock in the morning until nearly four in the afternoon.

The possibility of such a service of course depended on the continued presence of the French *emigrés* in London, without whom it would have been impossible to find the requisite five bishops to give the "Absolutions". Among these will also be noticed the name of the Bishop of Waterford. This was Dr. Hussey, who had returned to the Spanish Chapel in 1797, after an absence of four years. About this time, he left London for good: we may perhaps be excused therefore in making a short digression on the later career of this remarkable prelate.

Dr. Hussey had gone to Ireland in the first instance in 1793, on a mission from Pitt and the Duke of Portland, in order to use his influence in checking an outbreak of disaffection among the soldiers there. For this purpose he obtained from Rome an appointment as chaplain over the military. There was of course at that time no regular provision to enable Catholic soldiers to frequent their own place of worship. Theoretically they were bound to attend "Church Parade" with the others. In practice, when there happened to be a Catholic church in the neighbourhood, as was commonly the case in Ireland, they were able to attend it, and their absence from the parade was informally tolerated by the officers. This was, however, not always the case, and the outburst of disaffection at this time seems to have been caused by an excessive punishment administered on one such occasion to a party of Catholic soldiers who refused to attend Church Parade.

Dr. Hussey's mission does not appear to have met with much direct result; but an indirect consequence was that being in touch with those in authority in Ireland, he was appointed a trustee and visitor to the new college at Maynooth, which was about to be founded and endowed by the Government, and when it was opened, in 1794, he was appointed its first president. In his new capacity, however, he was not altogether successful, and the see of Waterford and Lismore having fallen vacant, by the advice of the Irish bishops, Dr. Hussey was appointed to it. He was consecrated on February 26, 1797.

The new bishop's residence in Waterford was not of long

duration. A pastoral which he wrote soon after his consecration caused a sensation by its outspoken language, and led to his leaving the country.[1] The part which gave chief offence was his exhortation, addressed through his clergy, to the soldiers of Ireland, to resist any orders requiring them to attend Protestant places of worship. His plain speaking caused a final severance between himself and the Government. He left Ireland, and took up his residence once more in London as Spanish chaplain —for he had never resigned that post—intending to retire into private life. He applied to Rome for a permanent dispensation from the duty of residence in his diocese, which was granted on the understanding that he should make suitable provision for its government "by Vicars".

Notwithstanding Bishop Hussey's determination to retire into private life, his stay in London, in the event, brought him face to face with continual trouble. On two separate occasions he was suspended by name from ecclesiastical functions, a position most unusual for a bishop. The first of these occasions came by the issue of Bishop Walmesley's censure on those priests whose names appear in the *Third Blue Book* affixed to what we have called the "Persuasive Resolution" of 1790. The censure was issued less than three weeks after Bishop Hussey's arrival in London, and although he declared that he had not been present at the meeting at which the Resolution had been passed, Bishop Walmesley was as unwilling in his case, as he was in that of the others, to remove the suspension without a public retractation. Bishop Hussey wrote his views on the Resolution at length, and his letter is preserved among the *Clifton Archives*. He contended that the Resolution could be understood in a right sense or in a wrong one; though he admitted that as it stood, without context, he would not wish his signature to be affixed to it. In his case the question was simply one of defending his character, for he rarely if ever visited the Western District, so that it was not likely to become practical. In the event, after Bishop Walmesley's death a few months later, as we have seen, the censure was removed.

The other suspension which Bishop Hussey incurred the following year, was more practical, being at the hands of

[1] The pastoral is printed in full in Bishop Healey's *History of Maynooth* Appendix IX.

Bishop Douglass himself. The full history is told by the latter in his Diary. The origin of the dispute which led to the suspension concerned one of the assistant chaplains at the Spanish Embassy. On the resignation of Mr. Bowland, Bishop Hussey appointed in his place the Rev. Thomas Fallon, professing at the same time to give him all necessary faculties, and this he did without even consulting Bishop Douglass. It does not appear that the faculties which he professed to give consisted of more than authority to say Mass and preach; but in this case it involved a challenge of Dr. Douglass's authority, for he had suspended Rev. Thomas Fallon for past misconduct. Dr. Douglass decided to meet this act of defiance, as he considered it, by a direct assertion of his power, and boldly suspended Dr. Hussey. This measure naturally called forth much comment, and some considered that Dr. Douglass had acted in a high-handed manner. Dr. Hussey contended that he had only appointed Mr. Fallon over the military, and this he had power to do by the faculties he had received from Rome several years before. Dr. Douglass, on the other hand, maintained that this was an afterthought, which Dr. Hussey had invented to escape from a false position. Mgr. Erskine took Dr. Hussey's side, considering that he had been used with indignity, and pointing out that he was a bishop-in-ordinary, whereas Dr. Douglass was only a vicar apostolic. He wrote to the nuncio at Florence, Mgr. Odeschalchi, who was in communication with Pope Pius VI. during his imprisonment in that city, and received an answer from His Holiness himself, asking him what course he suggested in order to induce Bishop Douglass to yield.[1] In the meantime, before the arrival of this letter an amicable arrangement had been effected between the two bishops, at a conference at the house of Dr. Collins at Harrow, when in consideration of an explanation given by Dr. Hussey, his faculties were restored to him. As soon, however, as he learnt that he had obtained the Pope's ear, he pressed his advantage further, and eventually, on November 17, 1798, Dr. Douglass, being anxious not to increase the Pope's sufferings during his imprisonment by prolonging the dispute, magnanimously gave way, and agreed to the appointment of Mr. Fallon. The latter continued to exercise the office of assistant chap-

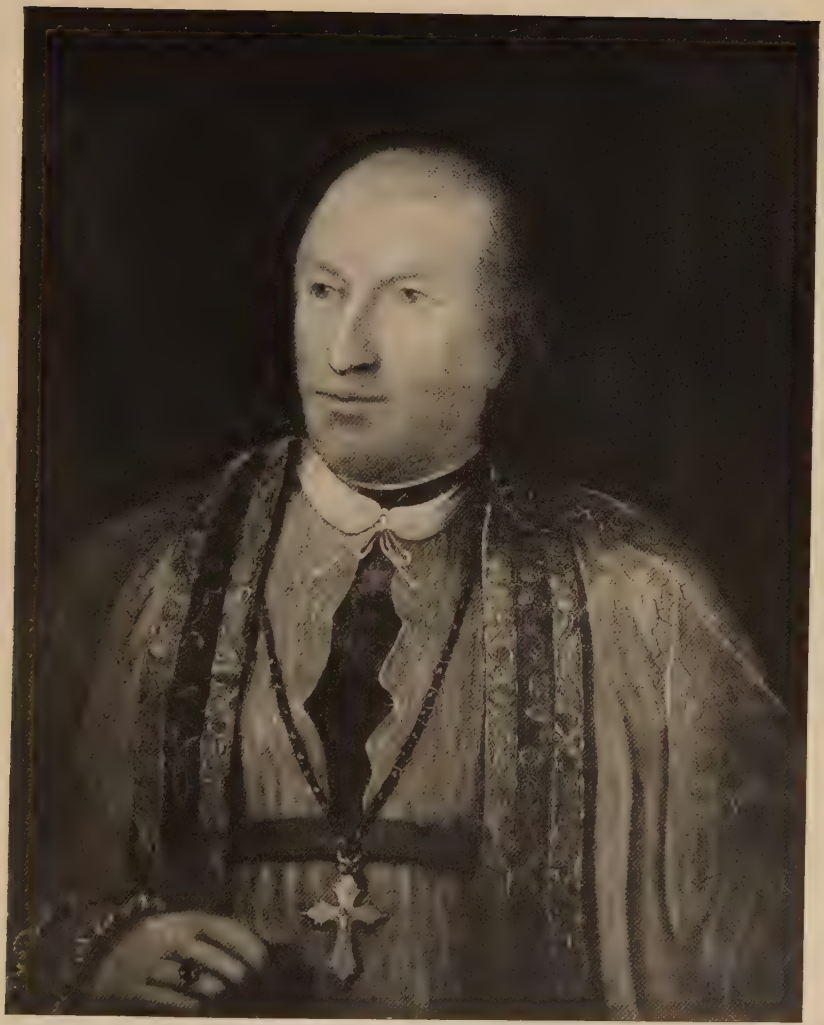
[1] *Memoirs of Cardinal Erskine*, by Mazière Brady, p. 143.

lain at the Spanish Chapel, until his death on January 12, 1800, at the age of forty-eight.

Dr. Hussey did not remain in London long after the closing of this incident. Several causes combined to render the city less attractive to him than formerly, not the least being the death of his intimate friend Edmund Burke, which had taken place the previous year. His cousin, Rev. Gerard Robinson, who had been an assistant at the Spanish Chapel for many years past, also died the following spring. Nevertheless, the immediate reason of Dr. Hussey's departure, according to Dr. Douglass, was that "The Government required him to quit London on account of his political principles and the company he kept (Irishmen)". Dr. Douglass adds that "He was allowed by Government to go to Spain, but as he could not obtain a passport from the French Directory to travel through France to that kingdom, he has hitherto stayed in England". Apparently, after the fall of the Directory, he succeeded in obtaining a passport, for he is said to have resided for a considerable time in Paris. His movements, however, are shrouded in some obscurity. Although Dr. Douglass enters in his Diary under May, 1799, that Dr. Hussey had left London "some weeks ago," it would seem that he soon returned, at least on a long visit, for not only was he present at the *Requiem* for the Pope the following November, as already described, but the registers at the Spanish Chapel show that he was in London in January and February, 1800. After this his signature does not occur, except on one occasion in February, 1802, when he was probably on his way back to his own diocese. He spent the last year of his life at Waterford. He died on July 11, 1803, at the neighbouring watering-place of Tramore, his death being due to a seizure of apoplexy while bathing.

We can now resume the history of the English Catholics. Several events happened at this time to cause them anxiety, which we must now proceed to consider. Most of these centred around the abortive Monastic Institutions Bill, which was before

[1] Bishop Healey says that Hussey died of apoplexy at Dunmore, which is rather nearer to Waterford, and does not mention that he was bathing. Dr. Douglass in his Diary says that Bishop Hussey died "of an apoplectic fit on coming out of the water after bathing," and adds, "he is said by another account to have remained in the fit two days before he died".



Bishop Hussey, F.R.S.

Parliament in the first half of the year 1800. We can introduce the subject with the following quotation from Dr. Douglass's Diary:—

"1800. March 21. Lord Petre called on me this day, and told me that Sir H. P. Mildmay, M.P. for Westbury, Wilts, had given notice in the House on the 19th inst. that he would move on an early day for an enquiry into the nature of the monastic establishments in this country, &c. &c., for preventing the growth of popery, and for the amending of the Act passed last Parliament in our favour, etc., because the clergy and certain of the people of Winchester had influenced his mind, and urged him to make that motion. Lord Petre being alarmed (as were also many other Catholics) by the reading in the newspaper an account of Sir Henry P. Mildmay having given the notice in the House of Commons, waited on Sir H. P. Mildmay, expostulated with him on the impropriety of making such a motion, which would afflict the whole body of Catholics, &c., soothed his mind, and discovered that Mr. Milner's answer to Dr. Sturges was the source of the whole evil. Sir Henry inveighed against the book and said that the University of Oxford had taken the alarm at it, &c."

In order to understand the allusion here made, a few words must be premised on the controversy between Milner and Dr. Sturges. Milner's *History of Winchester* was published in two large quarto volumes, the first of which appeared in 1798, and drew considerable attention by reason of the extensive learning and research which it exhibited, especially coming as it did from a Catholic priest. Through the instrumentality of Sir John Cox Hippisley, a copy was presented to the king, who expressed himself much interested in the work. Milner was already known in his own neighbourhood. He had moreover been a Fellow of the Society of Antiquaries since 1792; but this was the first work of his to attract general notice. The style he adopted throughout was characteristic of himself,[1] plain spoken and blunt, and he wrote without thought of any offence he might give to others. Moreover, he of course viewed

[1] Milner's remarks about his own style are not without interest. Writing to Bishop Douglass on November 8, 1792, he says: "I perceive he (Bishop Walmesley) thinks my style too ornamental. I am directed to split my long sentences into several short ones. I am afraid it will be hard for me to write in a style so unlike my own, and that the public will not be the better for it."

everything from the Catholic standpoint, without making any allowance for the different outlook which a non-Catholic would necessarily have. Thus his work could hardly fail to give offence to Protestants. Incidentally it contained a severe attack on Dr. Hoadly,[1] the well known latitudinarian Bishop of Winchester (1734-61), of whom he said that "both living and dying he undermined the Church of which he was a prelate". This drew forth a reply from Dr. Sturges, Chancellor and Prebendary of Winchester, who had owed his promotion many years before to Dr. Hoadly. The answer was entitled *Reflections on the Principles and Institutions of Popery*, and was also characteristic of the attitude towards Catholics of the Protestants of that day. It consisted of seven letters on "Popery" in its various aspects; but it cannot be called an answer to Milner more than indirectly; for although in the first letter, he gave a short commentary on Milner's qualifications for writing, and on the faults which he considered he had committed, the other letters contained only a few incidental references to his writings, and for the most part in footnotes. Milner replied with his well known "Letters to a Prebendary," which appeared early in the year with which we are now concerned. Again his language was calculated to cause ill feeling, perhaps all the more on account of the strength of the case he made out. There were in all eight letters, the last of which was entitled "Hoadlyism," and was devoted to making good his charges against that bishop.

We have Milner's own authority[2] for saying that Sir Henry Mildmay's bill was a direct retort in this controversy. There was, however, a further source of irritation which was not without its effect on the course adopted. This was the imprudent behaviour of M. Fleury, a French *emigré* priest, who lived outside Winchester. He had leave to say Mass in his lodgings, and he used to admit a few of the cottagers around, who were Catholics, without having fulfilled the conditions imposed by the Act of 1791 to constitute it a public chapel. This was the more regrettable, as the French priests as a body

[1] Dr. Hoadly was born in 1676. In 1715 he became Bishop of Bangor; was translated to Hereford in 1721; to Salisbury in 1723; and in 1734 to Winchester. He died in 1761.

[2] *Sup. Mem.*, p. 104.

bore a very good reputation in the town, and even Dr. Sturges bears witness in their favour. As soon, therefore, as M. Fleury's conduct was made the source of complaint, it was considered advisable that he should leave the neighbourhood; but in his letters to Dr. North, Bishop of Winchester, the Bishop of St. Pol de Léon showed some want of judgment, for which he was freely blamed by Milner. There were two convents in Winchester, founded as we have seen in evasion of a clause in the Catholic Relief Act. This fact was well known, and was tolerated, as in other similar cases, out of consideration for the misfortunes which the nuns had experienced on the Continent. Now, however, it was currently rumoured that they were perpetuating themselves in England, by professing new novices, and this gave occasion to the ill-disposed to bring the whole subject forward. Milner, and others, considered that in the existing circumstances, silence was the best course, so as to leave the burden of proof to those who were their adversaries; though he considered that the Catholics, if called upon, could make a good answer. Writing to the Bishop of St. Pol de Léon, he explains, "There are no convents in this city, but only Catholic schools, licensed according to the Act of Parliament. It is for the benefit of this country that our female as well as our male youth should be educated in this country rather than sent abroad as heretofore, and as will hereafter be the case if Government will not permit that description of schoolmistresses whom the Catholics most approve of. There is no existing penal law whatever against making religious vows, much less against persons associating themselves to continue the work of educating Catholic females. It is indeed illegal to keep any person in confinement against their will, of which our school mistresses are sensible, and accordingly their doors are open for any person amongst them who is dissatisfied with her situation to withdraw themselves and for all persons in authority to see that no one is detained by force."

He also stated that the two novices whose profession was complained of, one of whom was Miss Weld, had in fact come over from abroad with the communities. The Bishop of St. Pol de Léon, however, would not listen to Milner's advice. In his letter to Dr. North, he openly admitted that nuns had been professed in England, arguing that every woman had a right

to choose whatever mode of life she pleased. His letter gave great offence, and was one of the chief reasons which induced Sir Henry Mildmay to bring the matter forward. This action, however, came, to say the least, with very bad grace from that baronet, as he was the owner of the Abbey House at Winchester, and had let it to the Franciscans; and when later on it was sold by auction, and the Franciscans bought it, he had expressed his satisfaction, and had even visited them there, so that he had actively connived at the breach of the law about which he now complained. Writing to Dr. Douglass, Milner describes Sir Henry Mildmay as "a dissipated young man, who cares very little about monasteries, or anything else connected with religion, and a man of very moderate talents". He adds, however, that being under great obligations to Mr. Newbolt,[1] he is very determined to bring forward his bill. Its nature is thus summed up by Bishop Douglass:—

"1o. To subject convents to the Aliens Act. 2o. to prevent the monastic establishments perpetuating themselves by receiving new members; 3o. to oblige them to give an account to the Quarter Sessions, *viz.* Justices of do. of their number, names and names of the pupils they educate; 4o. to subject all Catholic schools to the visitation of the Justices."

It does not seem that the bill attracted much general attention, or appeared at any time really likely to pass into law; one reason being that the question of the Union with Ireland was before Parliament that year, so that a bill of this kind was specially inopportune. But to Catholics with the recollections of the Penal Laws so lately operating against them, it is not surprising that it caused feelings of dismay and even alarm. They saw in it the possible beginning of the re-enactment of laws against them, and of a revival of an anti-Catholic feeling throughout the country. And they were of course without any representatives in either House of Parliament to put forward objections to the bill on their behalf.

As the bill concerned religion, in accordance with the standing order which we came across before, it had to be brought in the first instance before a committee of the whole House. This took place on May 22, when Pitt spoke in its favour. According to Dr. Douglass, this was not from any

[1] Rev. J. M. Newbolt, Rector of the Church of St. Maurice at Winchester.

particular sympathy with the object of the bill, but because as he said "the church of Winchester is a respectable church, and attention must be paid to it". Dr. Douglass also adds that Sir John Mitford, who was now Attorney-General, said "that he should support the bill, and that the Bishop of St. Pol de Léon, deserved to be sent out of the kingdom for writing the letter which he wrote to the Bishop of Winchester". The bill was passed by the committee, and the following day was reported to the House, when, notwithstanding a spirited speech from Mr. Windham in opposition, leave was given to introduce it.

The Catholics did all they could to oppose the passage of the bill. Their three leading peers—the Earl of Shrewsbury, Lord Stourton and Lord Petre—drew up a memorial against it, which they delivered to Mr. Pitt. Two other papers were also distributed among the Ministry, by Charles Butler and Milner respectively, the tone and substance of which were in characteristic contrast with one another. Dr. Douglass sums them up thus:—

"Mr. C. Butler has drawn up a paper of which he intends to write several copies and deliver them to some of the Ministers and to our friends in Parliament. His observations show that the Catholic religion is rather decreasing than increasing, from the growth of infidelity, indifference about religious duties, loss of our funds, and Colleges abroad, extinction or apostacy of some families. Sir John Webb's death and subsequent loss of many salaries for priests is mentioned, that ye French ecclesiastics have not made so many converts as related, that the Convents have only received those to religious vows who were with them abroad, and these only few in number, that the Religious ladies qualified to become school mistresses, that Mons. Fleury is not guilty of the charges imputed to him, his case being fairly stated. The paper finishes with a declaration that if any alteration in the *external* part of the religious establishments be wished for by persons of weight or authority, their wishes will be complied with.

"Mr. Milner also has drawn up a paper, which he has sent to Mr. Edward Jerningham of Lincoln's Inn for the same purpose,[1] in which is shown 1°. that the welfare of the established

[1] *I.e.* to be copied and sent to Ministers.

church is nothing more than the ostensible motive of Sir Henry Mildmay's motion, for he let the Abbey House to Mr. Weld for the religious ladies, and when Mr. Weld bought the house for them, Sir Henry expressed his satisfaction, and has countenanced them by visits; 2°. his real motive is to gratify the resentment of Mr. Newbolt, Dr. Sturges and Rev. Mr. Poulton,[1] which resentment is fired by their not being able to answer Mr. Milner's letters to Dr. Sturges. 3°. that it is inconvenient to the state to enact a new penal law against Catholics at the time of the Union passing. 4°. that it is inconvenient to the religious who will be debarred from following the state of life agreeable to themselves, who must emigrate to America or elsewhere in order to follow their vocation. 5°. that the charges of making their pupils enter into religion are false. 6°. that Acts of Parliament to hinder people making vows of voluntary poverty &c. are inefficacious Acts, because no particular dress or living in community &c. are essential to such vows."

The measures taken by Catholics proved unavailing. The bill passed through the remaining stages in the House of Commons without serious opposition. It was read the first time on June 5 and ordered to be printed. At the second reading debate on June 11, Messrs. Sheridan, Hobhouse and Sir William Young spoke against it; but it was passed without a division. On the 23rd, the House was to go into committee on the bill, and the motion was made for the Speaker to leave the chair. Mr. Windham spoke strongly against the whole bill, and hoped that it would be defeated *in toto*. He was supported by Mr. Sheridan and Mr. Hobhouse; but others spoke in favour of the bill, and the House divided, when the motion was carried by fifty-five to twenty-four. The committee stage continued on the 24th and 26th, but in a somewhat half-hearted way. Sir Henry Mildmay admitted that there were reasons for the bill which it was thought wiser not to publish, and hinted that it was intended for the purpose of protecting the convents from public odium. To this Mr. Windham at once rejoined that they themselves looked upon the bill as a grievance, and both he and Mr. Sheridan called upon the Government not to proceed further with it. Their opposition seemed likely to succeed; but when the committee assembled on the 26th, it was an-

[1] A Prebendary of Winchester, and brother-in-law to the bishop.

nounced that as a result of some private negotiations with the Catholics, a "compromise" had been effected and certain alterations agreed to, in consequence of which Messrs. Sheridan and Windham withdrew their opposition. The bill accordingly passed through committee, and was read the third time on July 4.

In alluding to this "compromise," Milner speaks of the concessions as considerable, but totally inadequate. He explains that "the good ladies feel themselves much aggrieved by being required to leave the kingdom within the period of a year after the approaching peace, by being subjected to restraints in their schools from which lay schools are exempt, by being obliged to own themselves religious and thereby rendering their property obnoxious to confiscation as for superstitious purposes, and by being required to take out a licence at all to live in their native land conformably to its laws". He boldly accuses "certain Catholic Cisalpines" of betraying the nuns. He was alluding chiefly to Charles Butler, to whom he had sent the certificates of the nuns as legally school-mistresses under the Act of 1791, and accuses him of using these to the prejudice of the convents. Butler himself spoke loudly against the compromise, and declared that it had been made without the knowledge or consent of any of the Catholics; but Milner attached no importance to his denial. Writing to Bishop Douglass a few months later, he says, "I am glad your Lordship is induced by my arguments to suspect the truth of Butler's solemn declarations concerning the Compromise. For my part, I think he is so habituated to the practice of falsehood that I never believe him except where it is evidently his interest to tell the truth." And again in another letter, he says, "It is possible that I may be guilty of rash judgment, but whenever any mischief to religion happens or things are in an unfavourable situation, I cannot help thinking that Charles Butler has a principal share in the business. It is because I have so long known that man's restless dark intriguing character, particularly in every matter in which religion is concerned, that I entertain such suspicions: sic notus Ulysses."

Milner most probably had also in mind Lord Petre, and the other two Catholic peers who had an interview with Mr. Pitt, as has already been mentioned. Their love for convents

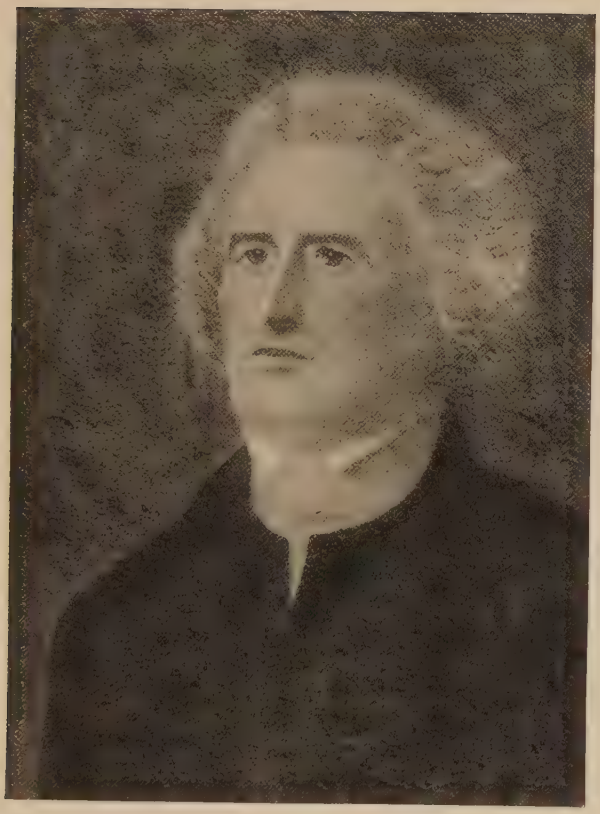
and the religious life was at best lukewarm, and they may have indicated certain lines on which they would have been willing to accept a bill to restrict the facilities of the convents. It is, however, unlikely that they would have agreed to any terms definitely without consulting the Catholic body as a whole.

The only hope now was that the bill might be defeated in the House of Lords. It was read the first time in the Upper Chamber on July 8, and the second reading was fixed for the 10th. Catholics again did all they could to make interest in behalf of the nuns. Father O'Leary wrote a pamphlet of sixty-five pages, which he entitled *An Address to the Lords Spiritual and Temporal* on the subject. Milner wrote to Lord Granville and the Lord Chancellor: the nuns themselves wrote to the Duke of Portland and Mr. Windham. Dr. Douglass also called on the old friend of the Catholics, Dr. Horsley, who had by this time become Bishop of Rochester, to beg of his assistance in their favour, which he readily promised. This proved the turning point of the measure. The debate is summarised by Bishop Douglass in his Diary as follows:—

"The Bishop of Rochester rose and opposed the bill in an able speech, on the grounds of its being unnecessary, dangerous and unconstitutional, 1°. because no danger was to be apprehended from the Convents; their number was inconsiderable, and they demeaned themselves well, &c. 2°. because the bill vested in the King a power of licensing persons to become members of religious orders &c. which would introduce a dispensing power, &c. and 3°. because such a dispensing power was repugnant to the principles of the constitution &c. After much praising of the Catholics, censure on many of the Protestant public schools about and in London, for teaching democratic principles &c. he moved that the bill be read that day three months.

"The Bishop of Winchester said the bill was necessary to lay at rest the jealousies and apprehensions of prejudiced minds &c.

"Lord Grenville opposed the bill because founded alto gether on intolerance. The jealousies and apprehensions were unwarranted, that the conduct of convents had been innocent and unexceptionable. Lord Grenville therefore seconded the



Rev. Arthur O'Leary, O.S.F.

motion of the Right Rev. Prelate, *viz.*, that the Bill stand committed for that day three months.

"The Lord Chancellor left the woolsack to declare that he was no friend to the bill, yet wished it to go into a Committee that it might be amended. His Lordship read some extracts from a letter which he had received (it was from Mr. Milner), in which Dr. Sturges' work was blamed and Doctor Milner's praised. His Lordship, on the contrary, praised the work of the former, and censured the work of the latter writer.

"The Bishop of Rochester rose again, as the argument, he said, was put on a new ground: that Dr. Sturges had certainly written in a gentlemanlike style; but that he had expected more orthodoxy from him. Dr. Milner had undoubtedly suffered too many asperities against the Established religion &c., but—

"Here the Bishop was called to order by the Earl of Hardwicke, as having already spoken once. The Bishop replied that the debate had taken a new ground, that the Lord Chancellor had delivered an opinion on the controversy between Dr. S. and Dr. M. and that he had a right to speak again, and that he thought—

"Here again the Earl of H. called to order.

"The Lord Chancellor again spoke to enforce order, when the Bishop of Rochester observed all he meant to say was that he thought Dr. Milner had in many cases the advantage of the Chancellor of Winchester.

"A general cry of Order. The question was put that the bill be committed that day three months, and the contents had it, nem. diss."

With this the matter came to an end. Nothing more was ever heard of the inspecting of convents, or of reviving the bill in any form. The following day, Bishop Douglass called on Dr. Horsley at the Deanery, Westminster, where he was staying, to thank him for the service he had once more rendered to the Catholics. He adds in his Diary:—

"The ladies of the two convents at Winchester have, under the direction of Dr. Milner, made four several emblematical drawings, appropriate to the character and station of each of the gentlemen for whom they were intended, and sent them as tokens of gratitude to Lord Grenville, the Bishop of Ro-

chester (Dr. Horsley), Mr. Windham, Secretary at war, and Brinsley Sheridan Esq., who so nobly and ably protected the convents in Parliament".

The controversy between Milner and Dr. Sturges continued. The latter brought out a second edition of his work, with additions, using especially the three *Blue Books* which had been put in his hands, and which he discussed in an Appendix, as showing the divisions among the Catholics themselves. Milner, in writing to Dr. Douglass, expressed his belief that this part was written for Dr. Sturges by Charles Butler, basing his belief on something he had heard from an uncle of Butler's who lived at Isleworth, added to the fact that Butler himself avoided seeing him when he was in London.

In order to answer Dr. Sturges, Milner prepared what is now known as the most important of all his writings, his great work on the *End of Religious Controversy*. It was not, however, published at that time. The controversy was causing such ill feeling on both sides that Dr. Horsley appealed to Dr. Douglass to bring it to an end. In view of the great services which he had rendered on two separate occasions to the Catholic body, Dr. Douglass consented to respect his wishes, and requested Milner to withhold his book. It accordingly did not see the light till many years later, when the reasons for keeping it back had passed away. His obedience caused him a struggle. "The injunction which you lay upon me not to reply to Dr. Sturges's supplement," he wrote to Dr. Douglass, "goes beyond the Bishop of Rochester's request, which was barely not to manifest any controversial heat. Certainly it is no slight sacrifice and self-denial to permit a defeated enemy to sing *Te Deum* at the close of the dispute, when it is in my power to silence him for ever by a single sheet. It is not less difficult to leave such contemptible scribblers as those who appear in the Critical and some other Reviews and as are about to appear in a second volume of the Hampshire Repository in possession of their imaginary triumphs, which I know I can so easily deprive them of in the course of a very few pages. However, I will be silent at least for the present, and will only vindicate myself in case the booksellers who are the proprietors of my History and Letters should give a second edition of them, on which occasion the public would complain of me if I neglected to notice

the objections that have appeared against the aforesaid works." He did as he said, and the second and subsequent editions of the *Letters to a Prebendary* contained a supplement in answer to Dr. Sturges. It ran to seven editions during Milner's lifetime, and an eighth appeared after his death. He also answered Dr. Sturges, together with his other critics, in the second edition of his *History of Winchester*. It is worthy of remark that he uses the same asperity of language against his critics on general topics as when defending Catholic doctrine against the Cisalpines, this manner of writing being apparently part of his nature. Speaking of himself in the third person, he says:—

"In writing the history of a particular city, he has had to contend with a host of local opposition. He has had to prove that its inhabitants were previously the dupes of fable and absurdity; that their former historians, celebrated as they were for their erudition, and intimately connected with those who directed the public opinion and everything else at Winchester, had combined to deceive them; and that even their public monuments, which were richly emblazoned and ostentatiously displayed, formed the most faulty records extant in the world. It is nevertheless evident that the Author has completely succeeded in this undertaking, as the whole care of his opponents since the publication of his work has been to secure a retreat for themselves and their friends." [1]

Milner was also drawn into writing on his favourite topic in the same postscript. The following words are of course aimed at men such as Joseph Berington, Charles Butler, Alexander Geddes, and others:—

"The greater part of poets, of orators, and even of historians when they sit down to write, consider not so much what is true, as what is likely to be well received by the public; and are much more anxious to secure their own interest and reputation than to enlighten their readers. This observation applies to Catholic writers, as well as those of other communions. The former know that to get rid of the prejudice which attaches to them in consequence of their religion, and to gain the character of being liberal, candid, sensible and learned, they have little more to do than to chime with the common invectives against

[1] *History of Winchester*, second edition, ii., p. 261.

the alleged bigotry, blindness and superstition of their ancestors, and to represent the heads of their own church, from Pius I. down to Pius VII., as constantly plotting against the peace and prosperity of the Christian world. Unfortunately they too often sacrifice the conviction of their minds to such selfish considerations, and publish what they acknowledge in their serious moments to be indefensible. Whatever may be the faults and defects of the present author, he hopes he has been and ever shall be free from this." [1]

It was natural that the friends of the authors named above should resent this language, and Milner's assumption that he alone told the truth. Many others also thought his language throughout needlessly offensive. Dr. Geddes published a book which he entitled *A Modest Apology for the Roman Catholics of Britain*, which though not written with express reference to Dr. Sturges—for much of it had been composed at an earlier date—disclosed, nevertheless, considerable sympathy with many of the opinions of that Prebendary. As, however, Geddes was no longer acknowledged as a Catholic, his work need not concern us here. More important was the conduct of Joseph Berington, who went so far as to write a letter which appeared in the *Gentleman's Magazine* for August, 1799, openly siding with Dr. Sturges, and thanking him for his book. "The spirit that dictated those reflections," he wrote, "merits the warmest praise, while their moderation admirably contrasts with the intemperance of the Catholic writer. But Mr. M." (he adds) "must be intemperate, and whatever he writes must be the vehicle of controversial abuse, so is his mind constituted."

The letter contains some strange statements to come from the pen of a priest. Writing of himself in the third person, he says amongst other things, "That some religious societies benevo ently fostered in the country, and protected by its laws, in direct opposition to the opinions and policy of that country, should dare to perpetuate themselves by admitting new members, he will think deserving of severe animadversion"; "He readily acknowledges, admitting the Roman Bishop to be the first pastor of his church, that much of the ecclesiastical, and all the temporal power [2] at any time claimed

[1] *History of Winchester*, ii., p. 260.

[2] That is, Temporal Power in the meaning then attached to the term: see vol. i., p. 143.

by him, was acquired by human means and that its exercise was lawfully resisted"; "In the successors of St. Peter, who have sometimes erred and sometimes been extremely vicious, he admits no infallibility, and in the united ministers of his church just so much as may save her from grievous errors and perpetuate by witnessing the chain of primitive truths"; "In the foundation or continuance of a monastic institution, to so many the source of misery, to some the source of happiness, he feels no interest"; "He wishes the law of celibacy, to many extremely burthensome, were repealed"; "To the authors of the Reformation, the extent of which he deplores, he does not indiscriminately ascribe unworthy motives"; and a good deal more of the same quality.

Great scandal was naturally taken at this letter, and Dr. Douglass wrote to Berington, calling upon him for a retractation or apology. The latter answered with what the Bishop describes as "a mock or burlesque retractation," which appeared in the *Gentleman's Magazine* for the following December. It consists of a number of counter-statements corresponding with those in his original letter. He says: "I ought not to have been pleased with the Reflections of Dr. S. nor have praised as liberal the spirit in which he wrote, because in sundry places he attacks the tenets of the Catholic religion. In saying from him that the absence of charity was the worst of heresies, I was guilty of a theological error. In mentioning after him some religious societies, benevolently fostered in the country, and protected by its laws, if in direct opposition to the opinions and policy of that country they aimed to perpetuate themselves by taking new members, I should have praised the measure, and not have said it deserved severe animadversion. Viewing in the Roman Bishop the first Pastor of my Church, I should not have acknowledged that any part of the power at any time claimed by him was acquired by human means, and was lawfully resisted, and though I might perhaps be permitted not to believe in papal Infallibility, I should have maintained a portion of inerrancy to reside in the ministers of her Church more than might save her from grievous errors, that is, more than is necessary to preserve the sacred deposit of Faith. Of monastic institutions I should not have said that to many they were the source of misery, to some the source of happiness;

and in their foundation and continuance I should have expressed much interest; and not have wished that the law of celibacy, which I falsely termed burthensome to many, were repealed. That my Church ever persecuted, I should not have conceded, and should have gloried in the intolerance of her professions. I should have represented every part of the Protestant Reformation as schismatical, and to all its authors indiscriminately have ascribed unworthy motives."

When taken to task for this "retractation," Berington protested that he meant it seriously. It would seem that his taste for satire had carried him further than he realised, and we can hardly be surprised that Bishop Douglass disbelieved in his seriousness, and once more withdrew his missionary faculties. This led again to difficulties with Sir John Throckmorton, who refused to support another chaplain, and as he and Mr. Berington were absent for a long period, the congregation at Buckland were left unprovided even with Sunday Mass. In the meantime, Berington determined to appeal to Rome, and informed Dr. Douglass thereof. It does not appear whether he carried out his intention: if he did, he did not meet with success. In the end, through the intervention of Mgr. Erskine, he came to terms with Bishop Douglass, and signed a formal declaration in proof of his orthodoxy.[1] This

[1] The following is the text of Joseph Berington's declaration :—

"I, the undersigned, do hereby submit my religious opinions and writings in general to the judgment of the Holy Apostolical See of Rome, whose universal spiritual and ecclesiastical jurisdiction throughout the whole Church, as also the authority of its delegates the Vicars Apostolic in the Kingdom, I sincerely acknowledge.

"I firmly believe every article of faith defined or taught by the Holy Catholic Church, the obstinate denial of any one article of which faith I hold to be inconsistent with the hope of eternal salvation. I likewise admit every doctrine concerning faith and morals contained in the decrees of the general councils, in the constitutions of the Roman Pontiffs, and unanimously taught by the orthodox Fathers and Doctors of the Church; and I acknowledge and adhere to the Canons, ceremonies, and general discipline of the Church, particularly in what relates to the celibacy of the clergy and the observance of the Evangelical counsels in the religious state. I hereby revoke and condemn every sentence and passage in my several publications and writings in which anything contrary to or derogatory from the aforesaid definitions, decisions or discipline is directly maintained, or indirectly insinuated; being sorry for the offence and scandal which the same have caused, promising to avoid every such occasion in future, and to prevent the further sale and circulation of the said publications and writings.

"Lastly, I consent that attested copies of the present original submission and retractation shall be transmitted to the Sacred Congregation de Propaganda

time the reconciliation was final, and during the quarter of a century and more that he ministered to the Buckland congregation after this, he never again fell under episcopal censure, while he was the source of continual edification for the exact manner in which he discharged his missionary duties.

Before closing this chapter, a few words more must be added on the subject of the Act for the Legislative Union between England and Ireland, to which allusion has already been made. It was passed by the British Parliament on July 2, 1800, and came into operation at the beginning of the following year. The Act was of course primarily a political one, and as such it does not fall within the scope of this book. But indirectly, it had very far reaching effects on the future of Catholicity. For the question of Emancipation, which continued to be agitated in Parliament, as well as outside, became henceforth primarily an Irish question. The disproportion between the number of Catholics in Ireland and England was even greater a century ago than it is to-day; yet naturally, the ecclesiastical authorities in London, together with the influential laymen, had the chief share in directing the course of events. Thus the veto question was discussed primarily in relation to its effect on the election of the English vicars apostolic, and the Catholic policy was directed by English Catholics: yet there were only four vicars apostolic to be affected by it, while there were twenty-seven Irish bishops. A similar state of things ensued in regard of all questions concerning the Catholic body.

But this was not all. It had been understood that if the Act of Union was passed, it should be followed by another for Catholic Emancipation. The promise was made to the Irish; but of course the English Catholics would have shared in the benefits conferred. The ministers were ready to keep their promise, when the king, whose health, both bodily and mental, at that time was very precarious, unexpectedly put his foot down, and declared that he would never give his assent to such an act, as he would consider it a violation of his Coronation Oath to support the Protestant religion as by law established. His

Fide, and to each of the Vicars Apostolic in this kingdom, by them to be made known or public as they shall think necessary for the purposes of this Deed and the salvation of souls.

"(Signed) JOSEPH BERINGTON.

"*February* 13, 1801."

majesty's action brought about a political crisis, and the Government resigned.

The anxieties among the English Catholics of the time when the question was under discussion, and the alternate hope and disappointment, are graphically described by Bishop Douglass in his Diary:—

"1801. February 16. The last week had been to us a most awful week. Doctor Moylan had been informed by Lord Castlereagh that the emancipation of the Catholics had been strongly debated in the Cabinet Council, and had been carried. Now by emancipation it was intended by the Ministry that the Test Act should be done away, that Catholics should be placed on a level with the rest of his Majesty's subjects, Parliament and every station and office under his Majesty or in Government should be open to them: that in place of every other oath, this one oath of loyalty to the King, Fidelity to the Constitution, and a renunciation of the Jacobin principles so prevalent at this day, should be the only oath required for any office or post whatever, and that the Catholic clergy should be pensioned and the Catholic Hierarchy preserved, the Bishops protected and assisted when necessary, by the authority of Government, in the governing of the Inferior Clergy. This was the sole condition required on the part of the Ministry, *viz.* that when a Catholic Bishop was to be chosen, three names should be presented to the King, and the King should have a right of fixing on any one of the three, to be chosen Bishop, the jurisdiction, appointment and consecration &c. being left as it now is.

"When the Emancipation then, accompanied with these advantages, was carried in the Cabinet, and made known to us, what wonder we were made happy and rejoiced in the prospect? But alas! His Majesty took it into his head to resist this determination of his Ministers, and of the Privy Council, and his Majesty's Ministers, *viz.* Mr. Wm. Pitt, the Prime Minister, Lord Grenville, principal Secretary of State for the Foreign Department, Lord Spencer, First Lord of the Admiralty, Mr. Dundas, Acting Minister for Irish Affairs, as well as for those for India (East Indies), and Mr. Windham, Secretary at War, with many of their friends in office, all resigned their places on this account, because having pledged themselves to grant or to

bring about the emancipation of the Irish Catholics, scilicet, at the time they were effecting the union of the two kingdoms, they could not be induced to remain in places which could no longer be held with honour. (The Duke of Portland continues in some office of Ministry, by his Majesty's particular desire, and Lord Loughborough has given up the High Chancellorship but has accepted another place) and have pledged themselves to each other not to accept any place till emancipation be granted.

"His Majesty and counsellors are busy arranging a new ministry. The King alleges for his conduct thus resisting his Ministers and Council that the Emancipation of the Catholics would be a violation of his Coronation Oath. How unfounded is this scruple! The newspapers, the general sense of the Nation declare this scruple to be unfounded."

It thus came about that one of the first effects of the Union was to bring to an end the long tenure of office enjoyed by Pitt and his colleagues who passed it. The crisis had important results on the Catholic question. In the extract just quoted, we see the first mention of the Veto question, which was destined to agitate Catholics for a large number of years; but the consideration of this, and other questions resulting from these events belong to a rather later date.

CHAPTER XXXI.

PIUS VII. AND THE CONCORDAT.

1800-1802.

THE Conclave for the election of a new Pope met at Venice, in the Benedictine Abbey on the Island of S. Giorgio Maggiore, in December, 1799. Out of forty-five cardinals who at that time composed the Sacred College, thirty-five took part in it. Owing chiefly to the complicated political situation, their labours were prolonged until March 14, 1800, when Cardinal Chiaramonti, Bishop of Imola, was declared elected, and took the name of Pius VII. The new Pope was a Benedictine of the Cassinese congregation, and a relative of the late Pope. At the time of his election he was fifty-eight years of age.

Since the death of his predecessor, several changes of importance had taken place in the political outlook. Chief among these, and most closely affecting the person of the Sovereign Pontiff, was the new condition of affairs at Rome. Nine months after the French had entered, Mr. Smelt, writing from Pisa, reported that Lord Nelson had appeared off Leghorn, with one frigate and four ships of the line, having on board 3,000 Neapolitan troops. The city surrendered to the joint requisition of his Britannic Majesty and the King of Naples, and the troops were landed. Immediately afterwards the French evacuated Rome, and the Neapolitans entered in triumph.

The departure of the French was not, however, final. Within a few weeks they had returned, but they were again driven out the following year. Dr. Douglass describes the re-entry of the Neapolitans in his diary as follows:—

"The Roman people, seeing themselves pressed by an army of Neapolitans on one side, and by General Frolich at the head of an Austrian army on the other, yielded to surrender

the city, and chose to and in effect did capitulate to the English, *viz.* to Captain Trowbridge, Commander of his Majesty's ship *Culloden*, on the 30th of September, 1799, then laying off Civita Vecchia. Accordingly the city was taken possession of by the Neapolitans. A Marshall of that kingdom governed Rome in the name of the King of Naples provisionally."

During all this time the business of English Catholics with the Holy See was almost at a standstill: and there was still no Bishop in the Midland District. For nearly a year no communication was possible with Mr. Smelt. His own movements are given in the correspondence between him and Bishop Douglass which is preserved in the *Westminster Archives*, giving us a vivid picture of the unsettled state of the country, and of the impossibility of carrying on the ordinary government of the Church. Some extracts from these will be of interest. In a letter dated Palermo, May 10, 1799, he writes as follows:—

"The newspapers will have informed you of the late revolution in Tuscany, in consequence of which I fell a second time into the power of the Philistines. . . . The French army entered Tuscany, on Easter Sunday, March 24. Ten days after that time, an order came out for all British subjects and others at war with them to repair to Leghorn, and embark at their own expense in eight days under pain of death. All places subject to Florence and its allies were forbidden. Mr. Wyndham, our minister, with those of other powers, came to Palermo, the only place except Minorca and Gibraltar. We followed his example. Our convoy consisted of three Swedes and one Dane, escorted by a Danish frigate. Lady Mary engaged one for herself and friends at 1,000 dollars. We had a stormy passage of twelve days. Mr. Wyndham with other ministers chartered a large Swede of 600 tons: on board of it were 200 English and French Emigrants from Toulon and Corsica, who had been in the service of England, and of course were sure of being massacred if they remained behind. Mr. W. sent a number of these poor people on board of our vessels; we were stowed like herrings in a barrel. I got a violent cold which brought on a Rheumatic fever, from which I am only now recovering, have nearly lost the use of my limbs. . . . Lord Nelson is here with his fleet, to take care of the King."[1]

[1] *I.e.* the King of Naples whom Lord Nelson had conducted to Palermo.

Mr. Smelt remained at Palermo, with Lady Mary Eyre, through the heat of the summer. Both of them found the climate trying, and on learning that the French had been driven out of Tuscany, they took the earliest opportunity to return to her villa at Pugnano. Lord Nelson, hearing that she wished to return, offered her the use of a frigate to convoy her and her friends; but the exigencies of the campaign compelled him to postpone the fulfilment of his promise, and while they were waiting, another opportunity offered itself, of which they availed themselves. We can again quote from Mr. Smelt's letter, dated from Pisa, December 6, 1799:—

"Lord Nelson, notwithstanding his offer of a frigate to convoy us to Leghorn, was never able to do it, such was the demand for public service at Malta and elsewhere. No opportunity offered till the latter end of October, when some vessels being loaded on account of the English merchants at Leghorn, their correspondents at Palermo requested Lord Nelson to give them an escort. The only vessel that could be spared was a Cutter of twelve guns: this was considered a very weak safeguard. However, such was Lady Mary's apprehension of remaining at Palermo during the ensuing Winter, where she had already passed so unpleasant and uncomfortable a Summer, that she resolved to venture, and in consequence engaged an Imperial Brig of 250 tons in ballast for about 700 dollars. We sailed from Palermo on Saturday night, November ye 2nd: altogether seventeen sail, Imperial, Sicilian, Ragusian and American, under the convoy of the above-mentioned Cutter. The wind became contrary the next day, attended with violent storms, which dispersed the convoy: only our ship and two others were fortunate enough to keep company with the Cutter all the way to Leghorn, where we arrived after being at the mercy of wind and waves for twelve days. Of the missing ships we only since hear some are arrived at Naples. The merchants at Leghorn are apprehensive for the fate of the rest, being richly laden and full of passengers, chiefly French emigrants banished from Tuscany."

It thus happened that Mr. Smelt arrived back at Pugnano before the Conclave opened, and he was able to send an account of its proceedings so far as these became known, to the English bishops. He also received frequent information of the

state of Rome, which he was likewise able to forward. Writing on January 3, 1800, he says:—

"Great misery still prevails there, some days no bread to be had. One of my correspondents says the Rich are become poor, and the Poor miserable. It is dangerous to go out after dark, the town swarming with thieves, the number of whom is considerably increased by the Neapolitan soldiers, the greatest rogues in the universe. No fewer than 18,000 of these raggomuffins (*sic*) are maintained there, which contributes much to increase the scarcity of provisions. The Romans hate the Neapolitans; some even prefer the French to them."

Again a little later, on February 28, he wrote:—

"Great misery still prevails at Rome. I have letters every week, each worse than the former: every article, even necessaries of life, are extravagantly dear. The French had time to send away all the corn, so that only a small portion of land could be sown, of course little can be expected the ensuing harvest. The present Sovereign of Rome, his Sicilian Majesty, allows his Roman subjects to have corn from Naples where they had a good crop last year, and the French were only able to carry away what was at Naples and the vicinity, for Cardinal Ruffo, with his Calabrian army, prevented them from penetrating many miles beyond that capital. The harvest in Sicily failed last year, although it is called the granary of Italy."

He was able to add some news of the English College. As soon as the Neapolitans had occupied the city, Sir William Hamilton, the minister at the court of the King of Naples, took steps to secure all British property. He was then at Palermo, whither he had moved with the Neapolitan court. He communicated with General Naselli, who was then the Governor of Rome, instructing him to commission one Mr. Fagan, an artist who lived in Rome, to take possession. Mr. Fagan was a Catholic, the son of a baker in Long Acre, London, who having made money in trade, had sent his son for education to the Academy of the ex-Jesuits at Liège. From thence he had come to Rome, where he established himself as an artist. During the occupation of the city by the French he took refuge with most of the other English at Palermo; but he was one of the first to return after the city was re-taken. He was

successful in reclaiming a fair amount of British property; but with respect to the English College there was a conflict of jurisdiction, the Cardinal Protector considering that he was the proper person to reclaim the building. He pointed out that in consenting to the appointment of national superiors, it had never been intended to part with the material possession of the College. Mr. Fagan, however, succeeded in pacifying Mgr. Dandini, the official "Delegato Apostolico," and having secured possession, proceeded to communicate with the English vicars apostolic. The Rev. P. MacPherson came back to Rome from Scotland about the same time, on a similar errand. He succeeded in establishing his residence in the Scots' College where he had previously resided; but the property remained for the time in Mr. Fagan's hands.

The English College was in a state of dilapidation. The French had sold everything they could lay their hands on, not only furniture and books, but even the locks off the doors. When Mr. Smelt saw it again a year later, he describes it as entirely uninhabitable, with scarcely a single pane of glass remaining; adding that "it looks like some houses in London destroyed by the Gordon mob in 1780".

Mr. Smelt was able to send Bishop Douglass early news of the election of the new Pope; but for a time great uncertainty prevailed as to whether the newly chosen Pontiff would be allowed by the Powers to return to Rome. On April 4, 1800 Mr. Smelt wrote:—

"The new Pope continues in the same rooms occupied by him during the Conclave: he certainly will not be permitted to go to Rome, at least as yet, where no preparations are making for his reception. It is thought he will soon remove to the great monastery of St. Justina in Padua, belonging to his own monks. . . . The Cardinals must shift for themselves, and find a living wherever they can, as they have done during the last two years."

A few weeks after this letter was written, matters were arranged for the Pope to return. We can again quote the Diary of Bishop Douglass:—

"1800. June. His Holiness having urged repeatedly his desire of going to Rome, the Emperor (of Germany) at length consented to his going, not by land through the Legations,

viz. of B[ologna], R[avenna] and F[errara], but by sea to Pesaro, in the Duchy of Urbino. Accordingly a frigate was provided (after many delays, supposed to be wilful), and on the 6th of June His Holiness set sail."

The Holy Father's journey was not a prosperous one. A storm arose, and drove the frigate back to port, considerably damaged. After undergoing repairs, it set forward once more, this time with better success, and the Pope landed at Pesaro on the 17th. An account of his progress from there to the Eternal City was given in the Catholic Directory for the following year,[1] which we can here quote, the tone of quaint enthusiasm being a reflection of what English Catholics felt no less than those of other nations on the fulfilment of longings which a few months before had been almost beyond their highest hopes. The account is as follows:—

"Having embarked at Venice on the 6th of June, he landed on the 17th at Pesaro, from whence he departed for Rome on the 19th, and arrived at his capital on the 3rd of July. He travelled at a slow pace, in order that the curiosity of the people who flocked from all parts to see him, might be gratified; and for the same reason he did not refuse to stop for some time in the different towns through which he passed. At Loretto he visited the sanctuary, and stopped at Foligno the 28th and 29th of June, to celebrate the feast of Saint Peter, as well as out of attention to the King and Queen of Sardinia, who had come thither from Florence in order to meet him. His Holiness entered Rome at the 'Porta del Popolo,' and went straight to the church of Saint Peter, where he remained for some time in prayer, and from thence proceeded to the Pontifical residence on the Quirinal. On the 3rd of July their Sardinian Majesties arrived at Rome, and paid a visit to his Holiness, which he returned. On the Octave of Saint Peter, his Holiness celebrated Mass at St. Peter's Confession, and from his first arrival, has paid a strict attention to the discharge of his spiritual and temporal duties, for which purpose he has appointed several Congregations composed of Cardinals, Prelates, and some seculars of the first families in Rome.

"Hitherto we have confined ourselves to a simple recital of facts, but as to the acclamations—tears of joy, tenderness and

[1] P. 19.

in a word the enthusiasm wherewith his Holiness was everywhere received and particularly at Rome, it may be conceived, but not expressed. Whilst on his journey from Pesaro to Rome, the roads without the least intervening space were filled by an almost incredible multitude of people. At every town the magistrates in state, and the clergy in processions went out of the gates to receive him. At Ancona the inhabitants took the horses from his carriage, and drew it to the Episcopal palace, where lodgings were prepared for him, whilst his Holiness repeatedly intreated them to stop, calling them his sons—his dear children—and saying he would rather walk in the midst of them. Measures were however taken to prevent this afflicting scene from being repeated during the remainder of his journey. On his approach to Rome, the inhabitants went out several miles to meet him. The nobility distributed provisions amongst the poor in the several parishes in the city, with cheerfulness and liberality. At the entrance of each of the three streets that lead from the Piazza del Popolo, an Arch was erected, and a colonnade of the same order of architecture, with a gallery over it, was built around the Piazza, at the corners whereof bands of music were placed. The city was illuminated for three successive nights. The Pope seemed very much affected, and exceedingly fatigued by struggling with his feelings; but when he arrived at the Piazza of St. Peter, and beheld the immense multitude who rent the air with acclamations of joy, he could no longer restrain himself, but mixed his tears with those of his people."

As soon as news of the Pope's entry reached Mr. Smelt, he would naturally have himself returned to Rome; but as the summer heats had already begun, he delayed his departure from Pugnano until October 16, when his plans were again upset by an unexpected incursion of the French. He writes as usual describing what happened in full; under date October 20, 1800:—

"You'll probably have heard before this letter reaches London, from the newspapers, that the French have entered Tuscany. Unfortunately I was in this country, and of course have fallen a third time into the hands of these Philistines. However, I trust that power which delivered me twice out of their hands will not desert me on the present occasion. Lady Mary

Eyre intended removing to Florence, and fixed ye day of departure for ye 16th of this month. I stayed to accompany her to that city on my way to Rome. All was packed up and every preparation made for the journey, little expecting any hostile measure during an armistice in which preliminary articles of peace were even reported to have been signed between the Emperor and France, when to our great surprise the French invaded Tuscany at all points on ye 15th, the day before our intended departure. About 1,500 men entered Pisa on their way to Leghorn, which was their great object. Our merchants having at least three millions of dollars in value of British merchandise in their warehouses, Mr. Penrose, our secretary at Florence and *chargé des affaires* in Mr. Wyndham's absence, received intelligence of their intention from Lord Minto at Vienna on Monday ye 13th. He instantly sent an express to Leghorn. The merchants set to work, and in thirty-six hours embarked all their property. There not being a sufficient number of English merchant vessels, three of our frigates which were there took all they could possibly carry. Even their decks were full of bales, trunks, boxes &c. &c. The wind was contrary: the convoy remained in the road some time, as it was not in the power of any one to molest them. All the merchants determined to remain at Leghorn, having secured their effects."

It would appear that on this occasion the French were not entirely bent on plunder as before, for we read a little later:—

"The French General at Leghorn desired our merchants to recall the convoy, giving them security under his hand. They returned not into the port, but lay in the roads until this security is confirmed by General Brune at Milan. In the meantime the officers of the three frigates come on shore every day, dine with the General, and he returns their visits."

In the event Mr. Smelt did not find it necessary to leave Italy, but his return to Rome was delayed till the following year during which time he continued at Pugnano. In the meanwhile in the month of July, 1800, two well-known English priests, Revv. John Nassau and Gregory Stapleton, came to Rome on a secret mission, and it was rumoured that Mr. Smelt was to be superseded. This rumour, however, had no founda-

tion in fact: they had come for a totally different purpose, *viz.* that of submitting the question of the marriage of Mrs. Fitzherbert and the Prince of Wales to the judgment of the Holy See.

The facts are briefly these. After the secret marriage which took place before a clergyman of the Church of England in Mrs. Fitzherbert's house in 1785, for some years the two had remained on good terms. In June, 1794, however, they separated, and the following April a public marriage was celebrated between the Prince of Wales and Princess Caroline of Brunswick. This marriage from the first was an unhappy one, and a separation took place at the end of a year. The Prince then turned his thoughts once more towards Mrs. Fitzherbert. For a long time she refused to encourage him. At length in 1799 she consented to renew relations, provided that the question of the validity of her marriage could be referred to the Holy See, and only on condition that the decision was favourable.

It would seem at first sight that such a decision was no more necessary now than formerly. If the marriage was invalid now, it must have been so throughout; whereas, if it was valid in the first instance, the subsequent marriage of the Prince of Wales to Caroline of Brunswick, however publicly celebrated, would not have vitiated the former one in the eyes of the Church. And in theory this argument is correct; but in practice, considering the publicity of the official marriage of the Prince in 1795, we cannot wonder that Mrs. Fitzherbert should have been unwilling to ignore it, and to resume relations as though it had not been, without an authoritative decision on her side. She therefore deputed her confessor, Rev. John Nassau, of Warwick Street Chapel, to undertake the mission, and he was accompanied, as stated, by Dr. Stapleton.

Considerable delay occurred before the deputation started. During the whole of the year 1799 it was known that there were no cardinals in Rome, and the Sacred Congregations were dispersed. During the Conclave, and for some time after the election had taken place, great uncertainty prevailed as to the future. As the spring wore on, it became known that the Pope would return to Rome. The cardinals were reassembling, and the ordinary work of the Church was being resumed. It was therefore time for the deputation to set out. Accordingly, we read in the Diary of Bishop Douglass:—

"1800. May 22. On this day, sacred to the Ascension of our Lord, after Vespers, all matters being at length arranged, Messrs. Stapleton and Nassau set off to Italy, to His Holiness Pope Pius VII., on the business of &c. Mr. John Nassau takes from me a letter of introduction to his Holiness, also letters from me to the Cardinals Gerdil, Antonelli and Borgia; also one to Mr. Smelt our agent. The object of their mission has been covered by the following plea, *viz.* that they are going to his Holiness on the business of our College at Rome."

The secret of the cause for which Messrs. Stapleton and Nassau went to Rome was well kept. Milner wrote that he was convinced that they had gone at the instigation of the Ministry, on some diplomatic errand. Mgr. Erskine was so angry at not being taken into confidence that he flatly refused to give them a single introducton to any one in Rome, which was the more marked as he had been endeavouring to procure Dr. Stapleton's nomination as rector of the English College there. Dr. Douglass alone knew what they had gone for, and he eventually notified in his Diary the Pope's decision; but conceiving that this was unwise, he so completely erased the entry that to this day it remains undecipherable.

Dr. Stapleton and Mr. Nassau reached Rome on July 4, the day after the solemn entry of the Pope. The question about which they had come was quickly decided, as we learn from the following entry in the Diary of Bishop Douglass:—

"Mr. Nassau had his audience of the Pope on the eighth of July; his Holiness received him with great condescension and good nature, bade him sit down, and harkened to the narrative of his business with familiar attention. The conversation was held in the latin Language, and closed with the Pope's directing him to state the case in writing. On the . . . [1] Mr. Nassau delivered the statement of the case in writing. His Holiness sent the statement of the case to Monsignor Pietro, and to his confidential counsellors. These decided the case in favour of the . . . [erased]. The answer of the two confidential Divines was approved by the Pope on the eighth of August. This decision was given to Mr. Nassau as being the decision of his Holiness."

[1] A few words here have been erased.

Although in the above entry, Dr. Douglass thought it necessary to erase his record of the decision we know now from other sources that it was in favour of the validity of the marriage—as to which indeed there would seem to us to-day little reason for doubt.

One or two other questions arose during the stay of Messrs. Stapleton and Nassau, one being that of the English College. Dr. Stapleton had brought with him a memorial from the vicars apostolic begging that the appointment of national superiors might be permanently legislated for. The matter was complicated by Mr. Fagan refusing to hand over the college on any other conditions. There were, however, at that time too many matters urgently pressing for this to come on for immediate settlement, and Dr. Stapleton left Rome *re infecta.* He returned with Mr. Nassau *via* Ancona, Trieste, Linz, Dresden and Hamburg, and landed at Yarmouth on October 10, 1800.

An indirect consequence of Dr. Stapleton's visit to Rome was that he was appointed vicar apostolic of the Midland District. It appears that Propaganda, acting on the advice of the other vicars apostolic, had decided upon recommending Milner for the post, and according to Mr. Smelt his briefs were being actually drawn out when, by the wish of the Pope, a change was made. The reason given was connected with his controversy with Dr. Sturges. Representations were made to the Holy Father that the appointment of Milner at that particular time would not be acceptable to the English Government; and remembering all that the Papacy had owed to England during the late wars, he consented to be guided by this consideration. He therefore cancelled the appointment of Milner, and nominated Dr. Gregory Stapleton, who during his late visit to Rome had increased the already high opinion entertained of him. The brief of his appointment was dated November 7, 1800. Some little difficulty was experienced in having it conveyed to England; in the end, it was sent to Madrid, and thence to Mr. Fryer at the English College at Lisbon, who forwarded it.

Milner was probably not sorry to be relieved from a position which he could not view without apprehension. Nevertheless he felt strongly against the manner in which this result

had been brought about. He wrote to Dr. Douglass to this effect, on November 17, 1800:—[1]

"My former objections having been done away by the late accounts from Rome (which are now public in London) to which I gave credit, namely that there was no longer any question of a change in my regard, I wrote to Mons. Erskine with as much spirit and copiousness as ever I did in my life, on the timid irresolute and inconsistent economy of the agents of the Holy See for some time past, to which I attributed a considerable share of our evils, and I dwelt particularly on the bad consequences to be apprehended from the new policy of consulting Protestant ministers instead of the Vicars Apostolic in appointing to our vacant districts which I understood was now introduced. I dwelt at large on the scandal which our pious Catholics would take should they understand that their superiors were appointed by the influence in question, and I had some precedents to resort to by way of illustrating my assertions on this head. I spoke of the field that would be thus opened to the intrigues of worldly interest and ambition, both amongst our clergy and laity, and of the certainty that there was of the most lax and latitudinarian characters being preferred to the most religious and orthodox by such a recommendation. I lamented in general the preference that was shown by the Holy See of those who had opposed it to those who had served it, and in answer to the objections which his Excellency has sometimes urged of the too great zeal of certain characters, I proved to him by demonstrative arguments that if the Bishops and their agents had possessed one degree less of zeal than they showed in 1791, the Holy See would not have an envoy now residing in the British capital.

"Notwithstanding the warmth of my style and the force of my arguments, Monsignor returned me a very polite and speedy answer, assuring me that he was not acquainted with any decisions of the Holy See of the nature which I had mentioned, but excusing himself from entering into any discussion on the propriety of consulting ministers, &c. He concluded with paying a great number of compliments to myself on the score of learning, services, &c. and with the most positive declarations that to his certain knowledge all these things were well known

[1] *Westminster Archives.*

to his Holiness, and seen by him in the same line as by himself."

A few months later, after Dr. Stapleton's consecration, Milner wrote again, on June 2, 1801, as follows:—[1]

"I am heartily glad that the Midland District is at length filled, and that with a person of Mr. Stapleton's merit. But in giving God thanks, as I hope I have done sincerely, for exempting me from a load far beyond my strength, I own I cannot but feel that I have been trifled with and disgraced by Rome beyond all precedent, and I have accordingly expressed my sentiments on this and other congenial subjects in a second very long and very spirited letter to His Eminence Cardinal Erskine, for so I learn from the newspapers I am henceforward to call him."

The report of Erskine's elevation to the sacred purple here alluded to was not founded on fact; but in the event it proved only premature. His elevation actually followed within two years, by which time, however, he had left England for good.

In the meantime important events had been proceeding in France. The Directory had been overthrown the previous autumn in favour of a Consulate, Bonaparte being "First Consul". Soon after this it became known that he was willing to treat with the Pope for the restoration of Catholic worship, and after some hesitation negotiations were opened by Mgr. Spina, Archbishop of Corinth, setting out for France in September, 1800. He arrived at Paris on November 5. The negotiations which followed lasted many months. The proposal of Napoleon that the Church should acquiesce in the spoliation of all her lands and property, and that all the bishops should be called upon to resign their sees, so that he could redistribute the dioceses and nominate a completely new episcopate, were so novel and far-reaching that it is not wonderful that it took time to discuss them in all their bearings. In return for these concessions, the Catholic religion was to be re-established, and supported by an annual payment; but in future, the nomination of all the bishops was to be in the hands of the State, subject of course to confirmation by the Pope. These questions were still under consideration when Cardinal Consalvi came to Paris in June, 1801. After some further discussion, the Concordat was ulti-

[1] *Westminster Archives.*

mately signed by Napoleon on July 15, and it was subsequently ratified by Pius VII., who affixed his signature[1] in Rome, on August 15.

The signing of the Concordat was however not the end but rather the beginning of the difficulties which confronted the new Pope with regard to the settlement of the French Church. In order to fulfil his part of the agreement, it was necessary to obtain the resignation of, or in default to depose, the whole body of French bishops, a drastic measure without parallel in the history of the Church. The majority—forty-five out of a total of eighty-one then living—consented to resign. The others respectfully refused. Out of nineteen French bishops in London, no less than fourteen declined to resign, one of the recusants being the Bishop of St. Pol de Léon. They held frequent meetings at the house of Dr. Dillon, Archbishop of Narbonne, who was an Irishman. Mgr. Erskine had been commissioned to convey the Holy Father's request to each. They answered in a collective letter, but afterwards each also wrote singly. The reasons which they alleged for their action were summed up by Dr. Douglass as follows:—

"The French Bishops above alluded to assert that the Pope is imposed on by Bonaparte, that the Cardinals of character and merit in Rome are amazed at the Pope's proceedings in the business, that they have the best intelligence from Rome that Bonaparte has gained over some of the Cardinals, and by the influence of these bad men, deceives the Pope; that Cardinal Caprara is a creature of Bonaparte; that the Pope had intended to send another Cardinal to Paris, but Bonaparte, knowing his man, required that Cardinal Caprara should be the person sent to Paris; that Caprara is of the family of Caprara in Florence, who were at the head of the revolution in Tuscany &c. &c.; that the Constitutional Bishops look on the present proceedings of the Pope and Bonaparte as favourable to them".

It is well known that the refusal of the French bishops was in great measure due to political influences. They were attached to the royal *régime*, and the presence of the French

[1] The Pope had not seen the "Organic Articles" which were afterwards added had he done so, it is now generally admitted that he would have broken off all negotiation: see for example *Cambridge Modern History*, ix., p. 187.

Royal Family in London accounts for the proportion of the recusants being higher there than elsewhere. Milner as usual came forward on the orthodox side, writing a pamphlet which he entitled *An Elucidation of the Conduct of His Holiness, &c.*

The bishops who had resigned were urged by Mgr. Erskine to return to France without delay, as he said that this would help greatly towards the re-organisation of public worship; and they remained administrators of their former dioceses until new bishops—who in some cases were themselves—were appointed.

The bishops who did not resign were deposed by the Pope in the plenitude of his power; or perhaps it would be more accurate to say that their sees were abolished in the reconstitution of the dioceses, which were reduced in number as stipulated in the Concordat. The recusant bishops remained in England, and carefully abstained from placing any obstacle in the way of the government of their dioceses by others. To this general statement, one exception must be named, the Bishop of Blois, who returned to France and became practically the founder of what was known as the "Petite Eglise," the members of which adhered to the old *régime*, and refused to recognise the Pope's action.

During the negotiations which preceded the Concordat, the French priests in England had already begun to return to their country. Plasse says that in the autumn of 1800 they were leaving in hundreds. In the early part of the year there were over 5,600 receiving aid from the Relief Committee: by the end of November 560 of these had already left. It was evidently to the advantage of the committee to help priests to return, and they would advance them their allowances, even though knowing that if they left England, as was hoped, they would no longer be entitled to them. The cost of travelling to France was estimated at six guineas; and most of the exiles had in addition long distances to go after landing. In the course of 1801 about 2,000 priests went back. The general exodus to France was still in full progress when the Peace of Amiens was signed on March 27, 1802; and a fortnight later, the Concordat was officially published. This gave renewed impetus to the movement, and by the end of the year there were only 900 French priests left in England. The

number of lay exiles diminished at the same time, though not in the same proportion. By the close of 1802 the total number receiving relief, including both clergy and laity, was only 850, and many of these were English nuns, who of course remained in England for good. The aids from the Treasury grants continued to be paid to the survivors for more than fifteen years after this.

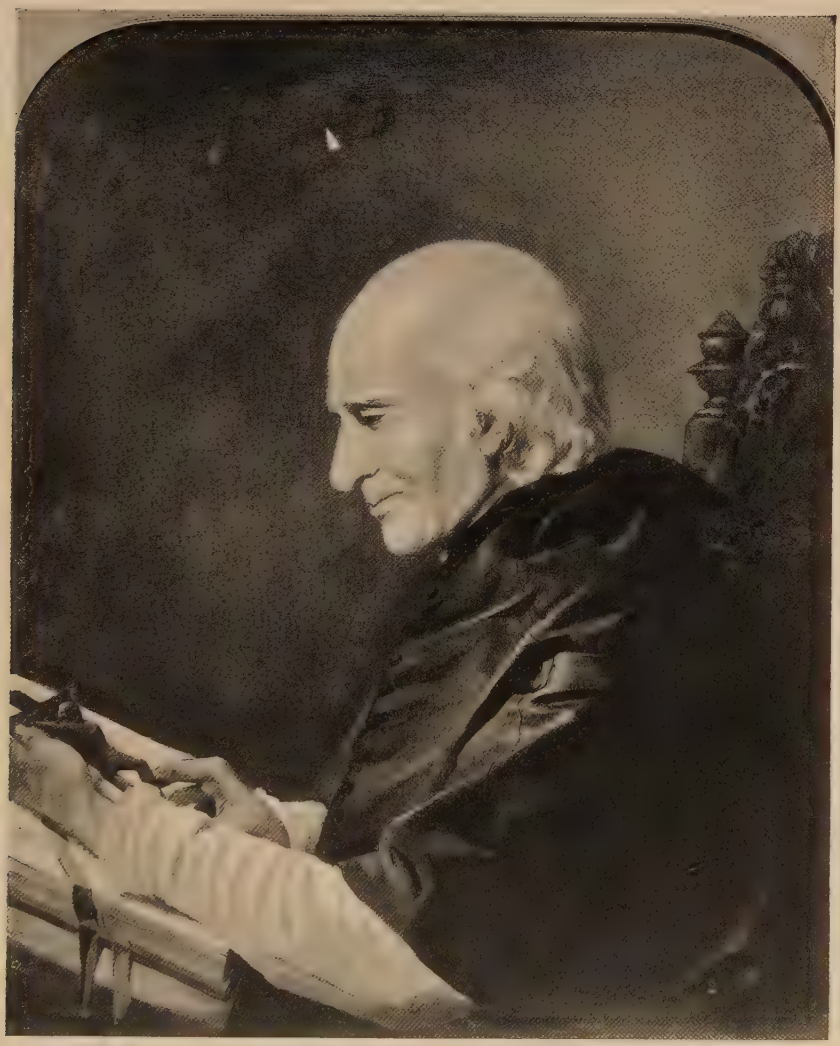
The French churches in London closed one after another. The chapel in Prospect Place, St. George's Fields, was converted into a school in connection with the mission in London Road; but most of the French chapels consisted only of rooms in houses, the use of which was simply discontinued. Three remained open—that in Little George Street, sometimes known as the King Street Chapel, which is still known as "the French Chapel"; and the two belonging to Abbé Carron. Of these, one—that in London Street, Fitzroy Square—remained in use until Abbé Carron's own return to France, twelve years later; the other, at Somers Town, has remained permanently: a new church was built a few years later, and the congregation has gradually become Anglicised.

Of the priests who remained in England, a certain number did so having become attached to their work: as Abbé Morel at Hampstead, or Abbé Voyaux de Franous at Chelsea. Others, like Carron, were strong Royalists, and considering the state of affairs under the Concordat as at best temporary, looked forward to the restoration of the Bourbons as the only really secure hope for religion, and preferred to continue their exile until this should come about. Many lay men and women also continued to reside in England, having lost all means of subsistence in their own country. Thus it happened that for long afterwards French influences were very strong in all the London congregations. This was visible in the material decoration of the churches, the pattern of the vestments, and the like for more than half a century afterwards: but it had a still more important and very salutary effect on the daily lives of English Catholics. The *emigrés* who had always been accustomed to the open profession of their religion in France, helped their English brethren to come out from their seclusion now that the Penal Laws were abolished, and introduced them to many Catholic customs and practices to which, under stress

of persecution, they had been strangers. It took time however to acclimatise them to their new position. No image of the Blessed Virgin was to be seen in the churches for a quarter of a century after this, and side altars were very exceptional. Processions of all kinds even inside the churches, were still unknown, and there was a tendency to consider many of the acts of devotion freely practised in Catholic countries, such as putting up votive offerings or tablets before pictures or shrines, or the like, as an abuse excusable perhaps abroad, but to be avoided in England. It is most probable that the strong tradition of Sunday Vespers which existed in the London churches was among the good influences due to the refugees from France, in which country there has always been the custom of chanting the Vesper psalms on the part of the laity. Vespers were usually followed by Benediction, in which a curious rite, partly French, was followed. The cope and humeral veil were of the colour of the day, and except on great festivals, the ciborium was used, which however was placed on the "throne" as though it were a monstrance.

Some of the French *emigrés*, however, caused considerable anxiety by lapsing into schism, analogous to that of the *Petite Eglise* in France. Their leader was Abbé Blanchard, and they have consequently become known as "Blanchardists". They did not hesitate to call Pope Pius VII. an abettor of schism, and they refused to recognise the newly appointed French bishops. Their numbers were small, but their activity was sufficiently great to cause trouble to the vicars apostolic for a good many years.

The English committee for the relief of the emigrants dissolved in 1806. The Bishop of St. Pol de Léon had died the previous year. Mrs. Dorothy Silburn was provided for by the Marquis of Buckingham until arrangements could be made for her to go to France; for she had elected to end her days in the midst of her beloved French clergy. She took a house at Roskoff in Britanny, close to the parish church, where she lived in peace and seclusion until her death in 1823.



The Abbé Jean Jacques Morel.

CHAPTER XXXII.

FINAL PACIFICATION OF THE MIDLAND DISTRICT.

1801-1803.

DR. GREGORY STAPLETON received his episcopal consecration at St. Edmund's College, on Sunday, March 8, 1801. The consecrating prelate was Bishop Douglass, and the elect was assisted by Dr. Moylan, Bishop of Cork, then on a visit to England, and Dr. Sharrock. The ceremony took place in the temporary chapel on the first floor of the college; yet it was on a scale which had long been unknown in England. Hitherto it had always been found necessary to make use of the privilege conceded to this country of performing the rite without the presence of any other bishop than the consecrating prelate; but on this occasion not only was there the full number of three bishops engaged in the ceremony, but each had two assistants who were either priests, or at least in sacred orders; while the ritual was carried out in a manner only possible in an ecclesiastical house such as St. Edmund's. On the same day Dr. Poynter was appointed to succeed as president, with Rev. W. H. Coombes as vice-president.

Bishop Stapleton is described by Milner as "of ancient family, and unimpeachable orthodoxy and morality".[1] It was known that he had before him great difficulties in the district which he was appointed to govern; but he was a well-tried ruler, having been successful in that respect both at St. Omer and at Old Hall, and confidence was placed in his mild and peaceable character, joined as it was to a mind both genial and sympathetic. Before giving an account of his work as bishop, we must retrace our steps for a little, to recall the condition of the district, and the various controversies of which it had been the unfortunate centre. These controversies came to a happy

[1] *Sup. Mem.*, p. 108.

conclusion during his episcopate, mainly as the result of his influence.

After the receipt of Cardinal Borgia's letter in November, 1799, Dr. Gibson considered that his right as ruler of the Midland District was irrefragably established, and although Dr. Bew gave notice that he was appealing against him, he did not wait but proceeded at once to act as the canonical superior of the district. He turned his attention immediately to what he considered the two great scandals there, the continuance of Rev. Joseph Wilkes and the Staffordshire clergy respectively in the exercise of their missionary faculties without their having made any proper amends for their faults during the late disputes in the Catholic body. We will consider his action in these two cases separately.

In the first place, in renewing the priests' faculties for the beginning of the year 1800, he expressly excepted Rev. Joseph Wilkes by name, and then called upon Dr. Brewer to remove him from the mission unless he consented to sign the formula which Bishop Berington had signed. It would appear that Dr. Brewer's former conduct in restoring Mr. Wilkes had been censured, and he now assumed an attitude of self-defence, showing an unlooked-for readiness in meeting Dr. Gibson's wishes. The following is the text of his answer:—[1]

"My Lord,

"I received an answer from Mr. Wilkes in which he informed me that he could not without great inconvenience come to Woolton. . . . As I perceived from ye sequel of his letter that there was no likelihood of engaging him to sign ye formula, I wrote that very day to Mr. Warmoll to inform him that I meant to remove Mr. Wilkes from the mission; for by our laws the President must give such previous notice, and allow time for one remonstrance. I did not receive Mr. Warmoll's answer before last night. This day, the 2nd, I shall write to Mr. Wilkes to acquaint him yt after ye 6th instant, he is withdrawn from Mr. Warmoll's jurisdiction and removed from ye mission. I shall order him to give notice to his noble Patron [Lord Shrewsbury] that he can no longer discharge his missionary functions of the residence of Newport. Thus de-

[1] *Westminster Archives.*

prived of a very comfortable situation, he has only to rely on his own industry and ye benevolence of his friends for a subsistence.

"As to ye postscript of your Lordship's letter, I am not conscious to myself of ever countenancing Mr. Wilkes' conduct in anything improper. In my late decision I carefully avoided saying anything about his conduct, and commended him only for what every impartial person must highly commend him when he made his appeal. I refused to take cognisance of anything prior to our meeting at Birmingham. As soon as a regular charge is brought out against me, I shall come forward with pleasure and I am not afraid to add, to ye confusion of my [adversaries.]

"I remain, my Lord, with sincere sentiments of highest respect,

"Yr. Lordship's most dutiful and most obedient humble servant

"J. BREWER.

"WOOLTON, *Jan.* ye 2nd, 1800."

From this date, therefore, Mr. Wilkes was once more deprived of his missionary faculties. As before, he found friends to receive him and give him hospitality. Some of the more extreme members of the Cisalpine party considered again that he was the victim of tyranny. They opened a subscription list on his behalf, which was headed by the name of the Earl of Shrewsbury, and according to Milner, some of them even threatened to cease to support their chaplains, as a protest—a measure which would of course have recoiled on themselves, by depriving them of the consolations of religion.

But the feeling in favour of Mr. Wilkes was less general than before. His continued and obstinate disregard of authority had placed him so manifestly in the wrong that many of his friends deserted him. His brother monks found it impossible to defend his conduct, and many of the laymen who formerly supported him, declared themselves on the other side. Thus Sir John Lawson, when asked to subscribe to his support, answered: "If Mr. Wilkes is not refractory, his body [the monks] will support him; and if he be refractory, I shall not contribute to his support".

In answering Dr. Brewer's letter, Mr. Wilkes showed his usual cleverness. In their "Encyclical" of 1791 the bishops had spoken of the Oath in the *Blue Book* having been condemned by Rome; and more recently, in the requisition which Mr. Warmoll sent at the instigation of the Vicars Apostolic, he had used similar language as to the contents of the *Blue Books* generally. Mr. Wilkes affected to assume that it was asserted that the condemnation had been issued in a formal manner, and demanded to see a copy of the "Verdict, Judicial Sentence, Dogmatic Decision and Final Judgment" of the Roman authorities. Of course he knew that no such document existed. Yet it was true to say in general terms that Rome had condemned the *Blue Books*, etc., for Cardinal Antonelli had written to Bishop Walmesley approving of the action of the bishops, and Propaganda had, with the express authority of the Pope himself, insisted on Bishop Berington withdrawing his name from them.

Dr. Brewer sent the letter on to Bishop Douglass, who replied by simply calling on him to enforce his sentence; but the Bishop also wrote to Rome, and received in reply a letter from Cardinal Gerdil dated June 30, 1800, formally approving of his action.

Mr. Wilkes had for some time past been professing that he was appealing to the Holy See. Writing to Dr. Sharrock the previous February, he said:—[1]

"I have delayed drawing up my memorial to his Eminence. In truth I feel great reluctance to perform the task; for in the actual circumstances of the Roman Consistory it seems to me indecorous to lay before them the paramount reasons which must oblige the Catholics of England to persevere in their renunciation of Ultramontane opinions and the usurped prerogatives of the Court of Rome."

This method of speech exhibited a state of mind which did not augur well for a moderately reasoned appeal, and as time dragged on, Mr. Brewer had fixed a limit, that it must be sent before January 1, 1800. This limit was now passed, and therefore a direct appeal to Rome on the main question was no longer possible, though Mr. Wilkes could, of course, have appealed from Dr. Brewer's last sentence, which was a sub-

[1] *Clifton Archives*, vol. ix.

sequent event. He chose, however, a more prudent course, and induced the Rev. Charles Bellasyse, who we have seen was a member of the Cisalpine Club, and a close sympathiser with that party, to act as intermediary. The latter called on Mgr. Erskine, and induced him to use his active interest on behalf of Mr. Wilkes. As a result of long conferences, a mitigated form of retractation, which Mr. Wilkes was willing to sign, was forwarded by him to Cardinal Gerdil, and all the influence which Mgr. Erskine could summon to his aid was used by him to obtain its acceptance.

These efforts, however, proved unavailing. Cardinal Gerdil refused even to read the new form, and wrote on August 15 a final requisition to Mr. Wilkes to sign the same formula as Bishop Berington had signed. At this time, Mgr. Erskine was about to be recalled from England, so the requisition was sent to Bishop Douglass. After this, in the summer of 1802, we hear of Mr. Wilkes abroad, in Germany, having had some kind of paralytic stroke, which affected his right side, and prevented him from writing. During his absence, the Benedictines held their quadrennial chapter in the clergy house at Lincoln's Inn Fields, and on the first day, July 14, Dr. Brewer called upon Bishop Douglass and told him that Mr. Wilkes, on his return from Germany the following month, would sign the formula of Cardinal Gerdil. Though he professed his willingness, however, he did not have to sign it, as during the next few years his paralysis continued to increase on him, and he was unable to return to England.[1]

We can now turn to the question of the Staffordshire clergy, that is, of the few of them who were still left. Bishop Gibson had met them at Wolverhampton, during the lifetime of Bishop Berington, when he was trying to induce them to retract. He now resumed on the same lines, writing to each of them as follows :—[2]

"DR. SIR,

"When I saw you at Wolverhampton, you told me that if the Bishop of the District required it, you would make

[1] See *Downside Archives*, in which Mr. Wilkes's subsequent history can be traced. He joined his community when they settled at Douay in 1818 : there he died an edifying death on May 19, 1829, having outlived all the other members of the Catholic Committee.

[2] *Westminster Archives.*

ye retractation insisted on by ye late Bishop Walmesley. As the power now resides in me, I think it incumbent on me, both from a motive of duty, and from the good will I have for you and all my brethren to desire of you to comply, and to require you in consequence of ye commission entrusted to me. You may make this either to Bp. Sharrock or to me. I am persuaded it will conduce to your peace of mind and conduce to ye edification and peace of many others. If I thought you would not, I should not have sent this to you, nor to others in ye same case. But I hope you will not defer any longer to express your regret. I remain, with every sincere and good wish for you,

"Your most obed. Humble servant,

"WIL. GIBSON.

"DURHAM, *Feb. ye 10th*, 1800."

This letter was not sent to Joseph Berington, as he had left the Midland District. His influence over the others, however, was as great as ever, and they appealed to him for advice. He was as usual in favour of making the satisfaction required, for the sake of peace. He urged them, however, to hold no direct communication with Dr. Gibson, which would be taken as recognising his authority to rule the district; but to do everything through Dr. Bew. Mr. Carter declined to make any kind of retractation. The other four signed a letter which they delivered on March 10 to Dr. Bew, who forwarded a copy to each of the vicars apostolic. It ran as follows:—[1]

"TO REV. J. BEW, D.D., AND V.G. OF THE MIDLAND DISTRICT.

"REV. SIR,

"We had flattered ourselves that by the publication of the Exposition of our Sentiments in 1798 every imputation would be done away from our characters, and every pretext for scandal removed. We had thought it our duty to give an unequivocal proof of the purity of our faith, while at the same time we acknowledged the inaccuracy of the form in which we had formerly expressed it. This we had the happiness to find procured us testimonies of his perfect satisfaction from our

[1] *Westminster Archives.*

late superior, Bishop Berington, and assurances of the fullest approbation from many of the most respectable of our brethren in all parts of the kingdom. But we are extremely concerned to learn that the satisfaction is not universal; and being sincerely desirous to clear up every kind of doubt, and to remove every occasion of dissension, we do not hesitate for a moment to do that in form which we conceived we had in fact done then. Having already acknowledged an inaccuracy in what is generally called the Staffordshire Creed, we therefore condemn it and withdraw our names from it.

"THOS. SOUTHWORTH.
"JAMES TASKER.
"JOHN ROE.
"JOHN KIRK."

This letter only partially satisfied the bishops. They considered that the epithet "inaccurate" was inadequate to characterise the Staffordshire Creed; and likewise that there were other writings of theirs—the rest of the Appeal to English Catholics, and the Address to the Clergy of England—which called for retractation. Before any further step had been taken, however, the vacancy in the district came to an end by the election of Dr. Stapleton as vicar apostolic, and it devolved upon him to take such steps as he considered necessary.

After Dr. Stapleton's consecration a further delay occurred in consequence of his falling ill while still at Old Hall. His state gave rise to some anxiety, and he was given out to be prayed for throughout his district. Fortunately as the summer came on, he recovered strength, and came to his residence at Longbirch on June 12. He wished to take with him Rev. Francis Tuite and Rev. Thomas Walsh, who had been under him both at St. Omer and at Old Hall; but Dr. Poynter was unable to spare both of them, and Rev. Thomas Walsh, after his ordination in October, came alone.

The first work which the new bishop took in hand was the pacification of the Staffordshire clergy dispute. He afterwards sent a full report to Mr. Smelt in Rome as to what he had accomplished, and the method in which he had accomplished it, to be put before Propaganda. From this report we are able to quote:—[1]

[1] *Kirk Papers* (Oscott), vol. ii.

"Before I proceeded to demand a retractation of these Gentlemen," he wrote, "I thought it prudent to endeavour to gain their confidence, and to consider what measures would most efficaciously produce union and peace, without irritating ye minds of those whom I apprehended to be not too well disposed to submission. This has caused a delay which might appear long, but I chose to proceed slowly with security rather than to expose the District to disturbance by hasty and violent measures."

He then proceeds to explain that all the Staffordshire Clergy (except one) had already signed a form intended by them to satisfy the absolute requirements laid down by Bishop Walmesley; but many others besides the bishop thought that a more ample retractation was called for, and he himself was of their opinion. He accordingly drew up and submitted to those concerned a formula, couched in language as considerate as possible, and accepted (subject to a clause added by Dr. Gibson), by the other vicars apostolic.

"After having endeavoured to gain the confidence of my clergy," he continues, "I invited those whose retractations were required to sign the whole formula, including Bishop Gibson's additional clause. I did not propose this to them as my Ultimatum, but signified that I should be exceedingly pleased with their conduct, and that ye public would be edified if they were to sign it. I was asked whether I proposed it to them as their Bishop. I answered that I did. Four, *viz.* Messrs Southworth, Tasker, Kirk and Roe, immediately signed it in full, and that in an edifying manner. I sent authentic copies of their retractation to Bishops Gibson, Douglass and Sharrock, who have addressed letters to me expressing their joy and complete satisfaction, which I shall make public."

The form was as follows, the last sentence being Dr. Gibson's addition:—[1]

"The Rt. Rev. Gregory Stapleton, Vicar Apostolic of the Midland District, having represented to us that in some tracts made public by us there were expressions disrespectful to the late Bp. Walmesley, and that in attempting to defend the Rev. Joseph Wilkes against the sentence of that his Ecclesiastical Superior, and in calling that Superior before an incompetent

[1] *Westminster Archives.*

tribunal we had expressed a right of judgment injurious to episcopal jurisdiction, we whose names are underwritten, without hesitation, declare that we now renounce every expression which conveys any such disrespect or derogates from the superior rights of the episcopal order to which we profess the most sincere and respectful submission; and we condemn and retract the bad, noxious or dangerous doctrine contained in the writings or publications signed or approved by us.

"THOS. SOUTHWORTH.
"JAMES TASKER.
"JOHN ROE.
"JOHN KIRK.

"LONGBIRCH, *August* 20, 1801."

The Rev. John Carter continued firm, and refused to sign any document beyond the "Exposition of our Sentiments". After waiting some time, Bishop Stapleton indicated to him that if he continued obdurate, it might be necessary, as a final measure, to withdraw his faculties. Dr. Stapleton writes that "his only answer was that he expected it, and that he was pleased with my free and fair manner of proceeding".

The bishop hesitated, however, before taking the step especially as some of his advisers who were by no means sympathisers with the Staffordshire clergy, nevertheless considered that circumstances hardly called for so extreme a measure, and that it would alienate the sympathies not only of those who had recently put themselves right, but also of other good priests of the district; and as Mr. Carter was well known at Wolverhampton even outside Catholic circles, some kind of a scandal would be caused. A correspondence ensued between Dr. Stapleton and Dr. Poynter, which ended in the bishop entreating the latter to come to Longbirch and confer with him, together with Prior Sharrock, whose community was now settled at Acton Burnell, so that he was not far from Wolverhampton. Prior Sharrock himself also wrote to Dr. Poynter, pressing him to come. "[Bishop Stapleton] thinks we shall render him assistance," he wrote, "in some important business, to which he attaches considerable consequence for pacifying his District, and reconciling his flock to the rest of their brethren. I have been more than once witness to the goodness of his views, his

conciliating temper, and the happy effects of it upon the minds and hearts of his priests. I have often pitied him, too, in failing so repeatedly in his endeavours to procure an able and experienced companion in his difficult and solitary situation. Do, then, stretch a point, to oblige him on this occasion." [1]

As a result of further negotiations, Dr. Stapleton drew out a new form of retractation, containing what he considered the irreducible minimum absolutely necessary, his object being to withdraw all sympathy from Mr. Carter, should he refuse to sign it. The Rev. John Roe undertook to put it before Mr. Carter, it being understood that it was the bishop's ultimatum. It ran as follows:—

"I condemn and retract the proposition that the Bishop of Rome is supreme in Discipline by ecclesiastical institution; I renounce every expression which derogates from the superior rights of the Episcopal order, to which I profess the most sincere and respectful submission; I also condemn and retract whatever has given offence or scandal in the tracts or publications signed or approved by me".

In reply to this, Mr. Carter answered to the effect that he condemned the first-mentioned proposition as inaccurate; that he accepted the second, not being conscious of having ever spoken or written in a contrary sense; and while he regretted any scandalous expressions used, to the remainder of the third proposition he could not give an answer, as he did not understand it. Dr. Stapleton did not express himself as either satisfied or dissatisfied. Subsequent events prevented the matter going any further for the time; and early in the following year Mr. Carter died. Though only fifty-five years of age, he had already felt the beginnings of his last illness, and on July 30, 1802, he made his short will. At the end he added a few words about his position with respect to the dispute, which are worth giving as confirming what has already been stated, that the motive at the root of the action of the Staffordshire clergy was loyalty to the two who were their bishops at the time when the dispute arose, and as illustrating the humble piety of the most extreme of them. The will began as follows:—[2]

[1] *Westminster Archives.*

[2] The original is among the Archives at St. Edmund's College, where Mr. Carter's nephew, Rev. J. Simkiss, was a student at that time.

"Anno Domini, 1802, *July* 30.

"I, John Carter, sound in all the powers of my mind, but enfeebled in my body, and having received many warnings of approaching dissolution, think it proper to sketch this short outline of my last will and testament. To die without money and without debts has always been my wish; but I am afraid will not be my lot. I hope therefore that Thomas Southworth of Sedgley School will add to his other kindnesses the trouble of seeing me buried in a manner becoming a poor, obscure parish priest, and pay all my debts."

The rest of the will occupies about half a page. After the signature a postscript is added in the following words:—

"Self love prompts us to speak of ourselves to the last, and self defence is an inalienable right of our nature when we are attacked by calumny. I loved my people, and taught them with undeviating fidelity the saving and orthodox doctrines of the one holy Catholic and Apostolic Church, and I hope they will in return pray God to forgive me my offences against Him. In His boundless mercy and the merits of His crucified and sinless Son, Jesus Christ, is my humble reliance, my only hope. Various motives have been assigned for my declining to subscribe certain formulas. Truth will be alive when I am dead. It is, was and ever will be simply this: I conscientiously—*Domine tu scisti*—refused to sign away the canonical liberties of the Christian Clergy, and obliquely to wound the reputation of two beloved Superiors.[1] My enemies themselves (whom I cordially forgive) cannot blame such disinterested, even were they to prove mistaken principles. *Odio oderunt me gratis.* Peace was my dear delight; but no frowns, no terrors, neither poverty nor fear of temporary disgrace could ever shake my attachment to truth.

"J. Carter."

About this time also death was busy with others who had been mixed up with the Catholic controversies of the preceding decade. Father O'Leary died on January 7, 1802, having reached home the previous evening from a journey on the continent undertaken for the benefit of his health. He was accorded a solemn *Requiem*, with a sermon by Rev. Morgan

[1] Bishops T. Talbot and C. Berington.

D'Arcy, one of his curates, afterwards president of the lay college at Maynooth. The funeral procession to St. Pancras was followed by large crowds of the poor Irish, to whom O'Leary had ministered, us well as by many carriages of the rich.

Six months earlier, an even more prominent figure in the Catholic body, and an intimate friend of O'Leary's, had passed away by the death of Lord Petre, which took place at his town house in Park Lane on July 2, 1801, at the age of sixty-eight. His death was preceded by a long illness, during which his behaviour was most edifying. His natural piety and loyalty to the Catholic religion asserted itself; he showed great remorse for the part he had played in opposing the vicars apostolic, and he had all the letters and papers relating to those unhappy disputes carefully burnt. His former friends were slow to admit after his death that he had made anything equivalent to a retractation of his opinions;[1] but there can be no serious doubt that in his last hours he realised that he had been to blame in the action he had taken in public affairs, and at the eleventh hour, he wished to make what reparation he could.[2] Nevertheless, the Cisalpines continued to honour his memory. A portrait of him was hung up in the club-room whenever they met, and a carved oak chair was constructed as a memorial of him. For many years also, at every meeting of the club a toast was drunk to "The Memory of the late Lord Petre".

Dr. Alexander Geddes survived the death of his friend and patron by only a few months. Lord Petre had left him a pension of £100 a year, which was only half of what he had allowed him in life; but the new peer, who succeeded his father in the title, voluntarily paid the other half. The story of Dr. Geddes's death is sad reading, for there was apparently a struggle between his sense of duty and his lower nature, in which the latter had the appearance of being victorious. The following account is from the Diary of Bishop Douglass:—

"1802. February 26. This morning also died at his lodgings, Alexander Geddes the pensioner of the late Lord Petre, and author of an unfinished translation of the Bible, replete with irreligious and heterodox reflections. He died under

[1] See Butler's *Hist. Mem.* iv. p. 515.

[2] This statement is made on the strength of a family tradition sufficiently precise and definite to admit of no real question. See also *Addit. Notes to Sup. Mem.*, p. 333.

ecclesiastical censure. The Rev. Wm. Victor Fryer oftentimes called at his house while he lay ill; but was always denied admittance. On the 23rd inst. the said Mr. Fryer called upon me for instructions, *viz.* what kind of retractation and profession of faith I thought should be required from Geddes for relieving him from the censure &c. Yet all Mr. Fryer's attempts to gain admittance to the dying man were in vain. At length Mr. Fryer took in his hand a letter and calling at the house, told the person who opened the door that he must see Dr. Geddes on the business contained in the said letter, &c., but this measure was defeated, the person saying, 'we are forbidden to let any one in to see him'. Thus died this unaccountable, heterodox, bad priest.

"Doctor Bellasyse has called upon me, and said that a French priest, Abbé de St. Martin, did gain admittance to him, and before he expired did get from him some symptoms of sorrow, and half-uttered sentences, and therefore gave him absolution on the principle 'Sacramenta propter homines, non homines propter sacramenta'. Dr. Bellasyse pressed me, on the ground that he had received absolution, to admit that a Dirge and Mass might be sung for the deceased, which Lord Petre had suggested, but I resisted the petition."

The biographer of Alexander Geddes, Mr. Mason Good, gives full details of the visit of the Abbé St. Martin, which he obtained from the Abbé himself. From these it is unfortunately evident that he had to stretch the laws of the Church as far as ever they would go in order to give even conditional absolution. Returning to visit the patient again the same evening, he was refused admittance; and on his arrival for a further visit the following morning, he found that Dr. Geddes had just expired.

The funeral took place at Paddington Churchyard, and a plain marble monument was afterwards put up by Lord Petre, with an inscription written beforehand by Dr. Geddes himself, taken from one of his works. The inscription is so characteristic of the man as to be worth quoting:—

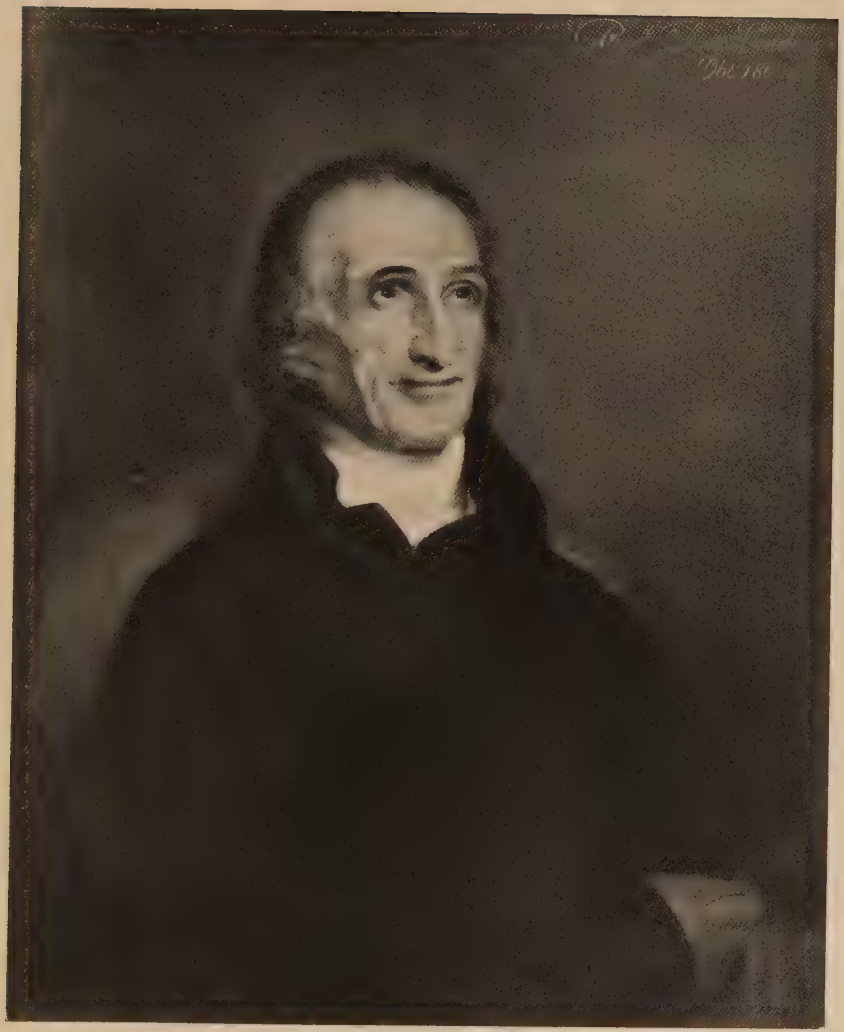
> Christian is my name, and Catholic my surname;
> I grant that you are a Christian as well as I;
> And embrace you as my fellow disciple in Jesus.
> And if you are not a disciple of Jesus,
> Still I would embrace you as my fellow man.

The translation of the Bible on which Dr. Geddes had been engaged was left in an unfinished state. Two volumes had been published, in 1792 and 1797 respectively, taking it to the end of the Historical Books and a volume of critical notes followed in 1800. It was understood that a considerable amount more was already in manuscript; but a strict search conducted at Lord Petre's request by Charles Butler, failed to discover any trace of it; and it was concluded that in view of his approaching death, he had caused it to be destroyed. Charles Butler had always been his friend, and in a well-known passage in the *Historical Memoirs*, he says all he can in Dr. Geddes's favour; but he does not seek to do more than offer some excuses for his conduct. The passage is as follows:—

"In [his critical notes] he absolutely denied the doctrine of the Divine inspiration of the sacred writings; expressed himself very slightingly on several opinions universally received and respected by the Church; and generally adopted the German scheme of rationalising the narrative of the Old Testament. The frequent levity of his expressions was certainly very repugnant, not only to the rules of religion, but to good sense. This fault he carried, in a still greater degree, into his conversation. It gave general offence; but those who knew him, while they blamed and lamented his aberrations, did justice to his learning, to his friendly heart and guileless simplicity. Most unjustly has he been termed an infidel. He professed himself a trinitarian, a believer in the resurrection, in the divine origin and divine mission of Christ, in support of which he published a small tract. He also professed to believe what he termed the leading and unadulterated tenets of the Roman-Catholic Church. From her—however scanty his creed might be—he did not recede so far as was generally thought. The estrangement of his brethren from him was most painful to his feelings. The writer has more than once witnessed his lamenting the circumstance with great agitation, and even with bitter tears."[1]

We now return to the consideration of public events and their bearing on Catholic affairs. The preliminaries of the Treaty of Peace between England and France were signed in Downing Street by Lord Hawkesbury and M. Otto respectively

[1] *Hist. Mem.* iv. p. 417.



Alexander Geddes, LL.D.

on October 1, 1801. The general question of reclaiming English property in France of course immediately came to the fore, and prominently included in the category of English property were the colleges belonging to the Catholics at Douay, St. Omer and Paris. The course which events took may be followed from the Diary of Bishop Douglass. He writes as follows :—

"1801. October 17. The 12th article of the Preliminaries above mentioned is as follows :— 'All sequestrations imposed by either of the parties on the funded property, revenues or debts of any description belonging to either of the contracting powers or to their subjects or citizens shall be taken off immediately after the signature of the definitive treaty, &c.' I wrote the above to Mr. Daniel, President of Douay, this day, and desired his observations on the same, in order to proceed to the drawing up of a memorial to be presented to Ministry.

"October 25. There having been two meetings held at the London Tavern, *viz.* on Wednesday the 21st instant, and Friday the 23rd, by certain Merchants, Bankers, &c. who had property in houses, funds &c. in France, to consider and resolve on the means of regaining their property, these Gentlemen have unanimously agreed together that the 12th article does not cover their claims ; that Mons. Otto has outwitted Lord Hawkesbury ; and have resolved to present a Memorial to his Lordship on the subject, that their claims may be more attended to in the definitive treaty. Mr. Poynter, President of St. Edmund's, attended both meetings. We declined signing the Memorial of the Merchants, but we drew up a Memorial for ourselves.

"And on the 27th of October waited on Lord Hawkesbury, his Majesty's principal Secretary of State for Foreign Affairs, at his office in Downing Street ; and presented the same to his Lordship, who received us kindly (*viz.* Mr. Poynter and self), read the Memorial over with marked attention, hearkened politely to all our observations, &c. ultimately said he would give the Memorial to Lord Cornwallis, and do for us whatever was in his power.

"October 29. On this morning, Mr. Poynter and self had an audience of Marquis Cornwallis. I presented to his Lordship a copy of the Memorial we had presented to Lord Hawkesbury. After his Lordship had perused it, he hearkened

to our observations &c. &c., and concluded by saying he would converse with the Minister on the business, and do for us whatever was in his power.

"I wrote an account of this interview to Bishops Gibson and Stapleton; also to Mr. Daniel, and advised him to come up to town, and go over to Douay &c. to see the state of our property &c., and to be ready to take possession if the same should be delivered up to us at the signature of the definitive Treaty."

Before Mr. Daniel came to town, a meeting of vicars apostolic was arranged. It took place on November 26, at St. Edmund's College. Three of the four were present—*viz.* Bishops Gibson, Douglass and Stapleton; Bishop Sharrock as a Benedictine was less directly interested, and took no part in the negotiations. The following resolutions were passed:—

"1. That in the present circumstances it was not proper to attempt the re-establishment of Douay College.

"2. That the moneys belonging to the late Douay College, formerly in the administration of the President thereof, are henceforward to be in the administration of the Bishops."

The former of these resolutions was of course within the general competence of the bishops; but the second one was less evidently so, introducing as it did an administration of the College funds totally unlike anything which had previously existed since its establishment. It would have appeared that such a change would have at least required the consent of the ex-president of Douay, if not also that of the Holy See. Hence it was natural that a second meeting should be held at which President Daniel might attend. This took place at Castle Street, on December 4. The three vicars apostolic were present as before; and together with Mr. Daniel there came Rev. Joseph Hodgson, his vice-president (then settled at St. George's Fields), Rev. William Poynter, Prefect of Studies, and Rev. Thomas Smith, one of the last "Seniors". Apparently President Daniel made no difficulty about agreeing to the apportionment of such funds as were left to the administration of the respective bishops, and he undertook himself to go to France. He begged hard that Dr. Poynter might be allowed to accompany him; but as he could not be spared from St. Edmund's, the Rev. Thomas Smith consented to go. For St.

Omer, Dr. Stapleton, the President, and Mr. Thomas Cleghorn, the Procurator (then a master at St. Edmund's), were deputed to go, and for the Paris Seminary Dr. Bew, its last president. For the Anglo-Benedictines, Rev. J. B. Brewer, the president general, determined to go in person.[1]

The final treaty of peace was signed at Amiens on March 27, 1802. Two months later, the above-named obtained their passports, and set out. They started on Wednesday, May 19, reaching Dover that night. The following day they crossed the Channel in such favourable weather that they arrived at Calais early in the afternoon, and were able to proceed to St. Omer—a distance of some twenty miles—the same evening. Dr. Stapleton was unwell on the Saturday, but his condition was not considered serious, and Messrs. Daniel and Smith left for Douay. During the day Bishop Stapleton became worse, and on the following evening he died. The following short account of his last illness is taken from the Douglass Diary:—

"1802. May 23. On this day, at the half hour past ten o'clock at night, Bishop Stapleton departed this life, at St. Omers, in the Inn called St. Catharine. He had been much indisposed while in London on his way to France; but having gone to Shooter's Hill[2] on the 18th instant he had there a good night's rest, and the next morning set forward in good spirits. When arrived at St. Omers, his heaviness and sleepiness returned. Dr. Bew and Mr. Cleghorn, who remained with him (Messrs. Daniel and Smith went on to Douay on Saturday) called in medical aid. Three Physicians attended, and all agreed on the propriety of opening a vein, as they feared the approach of an Apoplexy. After being let blood, better symptoms appeared; yet the stupor continued, and at half an hour past ten at night, he departed this life without a groan. . . . Monsieur Coyeque administered the sacrament of Extreme Unction, and the other spiritual assistance (Viaticum excepted). Mass had been said in the morning in Mr. Stapleton's bedchamber for his convenience.

"Lay people sang the mass at St. Denis[3] for the repose of his soul. The church was crowded with people, and the Munici-

[1] Rev. J. Brewer went separately from the others.
[2] The Earl of Shrewsbury had a house at Shooter's Hill.
[3] The Parish Church.

pality sent a deputation of their own body, to attend the funeral."

Dr. Stapleton's loss was much felt, especially in the Midland District, where his quiet and peaceable temperament had conciliated many animosities, and held out hopes that an era of peace had begun. Now, the clergy were once more in a state of anxiety as to who was to be their bishop, and were of course, as before, apprehensive of Dr. Milner being chosen.

For the second time, during the interregnum, uncertainty existed as to who was the proper person to govern the district. It transpired that Dr. Stapleton, during his illness at Old Hall, had formally nominated Dr Poynter as his vicar general, presumably to guard against this very uncertainty, in the event of his illness then terminating fatally. Many contended, however, that as Dr. Poynter did not reside in the district, his appointment was invalid; or even otherwise, that as it had been made in view of the contingency of a particular illness, on Dr. Stapleton's recovery, it had lapsed. Then, also, following the example of Bishop Matthew Gibson twelve years before, Dr. Stapleton had left behind him a suggested *terna* of names to be submitted to Rome, for the election of his successor. These also he had drawn out during his illness at Old Hall. The names he chose were Revv. William Poynter, Thomas Smith, and Joseph Hodgson. The absence of Milner's name was of course marked, and there can be little doubt that Dr. Stapleton's conciliating disposition caused him to look upon Milner as hardly the stamp of man required while the district was still in a state of friction.

As before, Dr. Gibson claimed jurisdiction, and equally with Dr. Douglass, resented the action of Dr. Poynter in allowing himself to be mixed up in the business. Both of them wrote to Cardinal Gerdil, begging him to end a difficult situation by appointing Milner as soon as possible. They added no alternative names. Bishop Sharrock, as a regular, was less likely to have influence. As a matter of fact, he inclined to Dr. Stapleton's view that Milner was not the best man under existing circumstances, but he thought that any opposition would cause delay, which might be a worse evil, and so he concurred in the nomination.

In Rome, the feeling against Milner still prevailed: but

the whole matter was brought to a standstill by the death of Cardinal Gerdil, which took place on August 12, 1802. He was succeeded by Cardinal Stephen Borgia, who had already had considerable dealings with the English vicars apostolic. He was even more strongly prejudiced against Milner than his predecessor, and wrote to Dr. Douglass definitely that Milner must not be chosen. This we learn from the following entry in the Douglass Diary:—

"1802. November 20. Rev. Mr. Milner of Winchester was presented by Mr. Gibson and self to the Propaganda, to fill the Vicariate of the Midland District, vacant by the decease of Bishop Stapleton, and Cardinal Borgia, Prefect of the sacred Congregation de Propaganda Fide, having signified to us that Mr. Milner must not be chosen to the vacant Vicariate, 'quippe qui in multas isthic incidit simultates,' Mr. Milner has drawn up a well composed memorial in explanation of his conduct and writing; asked what other kind of conduct &c. they at Rome would have wished him to have pursued when the VV. AA. called him to their assistance, *viz.*, during the contest with the Committee &c. &c.

"This Memorial is an able defence of the conduct and writings of its author, and Sir John Cox Hippisley has engaged to send it to the Cardinal Prefect. It was sent off in the beginning of December."

The question of the appointment to the Midland District did not stand entirely by itself, but was bound up with that of the appointment of a Coadjutor for the London District. Dr. Douglass had written so far back as the year 1799, petitioning for a Coadjutor, and suggesting the names of Dr. Stapleton, Dr. Poynter and Rev. Thomas Smith. Owing to the disturbed state of Rome at that time, and to the subsequent pressure of business, it was only now that the application came on for consideration. Dr. Stapleton being dead, the natural man to elect was Dr. Poynter; but as his name had appeared in Dr. Stapleton's *terna* for the Midland District, there was every likelihood of his being appointed, in the event of Milner being set aside. For this reason it was considered prudent to decide the two questions with reference to one another.

The determining factor turned out to be Mgr. Erskine.

He had left England in December, 1801, and, after a stay of some months in Paris, arrived at Rome on October 1, 1802, after an absence of nine years. Three months later, in January, 1803, at a Consistory held in the Quirinal, he was raised to the cardinalate. It was only natural that he should be consulted as to who in England was the most fitting man to be raised to the episcopate; and he spoke strongly in favour of Milner. This shows a largeness of mind which we cannot but admire. During this whole stay in England, Milner had been openly hostile to him. He had written to him strongly worded letters, and had used his usual uncompromising language at several personal interviews, and had never hesitated to denounce the abuses which he considered still existed in the Roman Curia, and in the management of ecclesiastical affairs. His temperament was wholly opposed to the temporising tendencies of the Roman diplomat. Yet throughout all, Erskine could not fail to see that Milner was by far the strongest man the Catholics possessed in England at the time, and putting aside all personal considerations, he urged Cardinal Borgia to make him a bishop, even at the risk of causing dissensions, which he admitted was a likely consequence; but which he considered that Milner would be capable of coping with.

There was still some doubt whether it would be better to appoint Milner over the Midland District, and make Dr. Poynter coadjutor in London, or *vice versa*. Milner himself would have preferred the latter arrangement, not only on account of his natural antipathy to the Midland District itself, but also because he would have preferred living in the capital. More than once in after years he reverted to this possibility, considering that as the position in London was a subordinate one, he was showing magnanimity and self-denial in expressing this wish. Apparently, however, this very fact, added to consideration for the feelings of Dr. Douglass, decided Propaganda in the opposite sense. We read in the Douglass Diary:—

"1803. April 12. On this day received from Rome by the French mail, the Briefs appointing Mr. Milner Bishop of Castabala in Cilicia secunda &c. Vicar Apostolic of the Middle District, accompanied by a letter from Cardinal Borgia highly complimentary to Mr. M. Also a letter from the same Cardinal

Bishop Milner,
Vicar Apostolic of the Midland District, 1803-1826.

Prefect of Propaganda declaring Mr. Poynter Coadjutor to me. The briefs are promised to be sent off in a week's time."

The consecration of Dr. Milner took place in his own chapel at Winchester on Sunday, May 22, 1803. Bishop Douglass was the consecrating prelate, and he was assisted by Bishops Gibson and Sharrock. A sermon, afterwards published, was preached by the Rev. Thomas White, who was nominated to succeed Milner at Winchester. Amongst those who assisted was Father Jean Baptiste, the prior of the French Trappists settled at Lulworth, where Milner had ever been a frequent visitor, and with whom he had made his retreat preparatory to consecration. The well-known figure of the Abbé Carron was also to be seen, and Lingard travelled all the way from the North to his native town in order to be present on so interesting an occasion. The Midland District itself was represented by the Rev. John Perry, at one time a member of the "Staffordshire clergy," but so far reformed that Milner had already appointed him his vicar general; and of course Dr. Poynter, who was preparing for his own consecration, was also present.

During the ensuing week, almost the whole company travelled to St. Edmund's College, where on the following Sunday Dr. Poynter was consecrated, the same three bishops again performing the ceremony. This was Milner's first, and probably his only visit to Old Hall: he preached his first episcopal sermon at the solemn rite which was performed in the temporary chapel of the "new College," in the presence of all the professors and students.

With the simultaneous elevation of these two most different men to the episcopate, a new era opens in the history of Catholicity in England, destined to lead to large and far-reaching results. The controversies of the past had been buried by mutual consent; but their effects could not be so easily put away. There still existed an undefined state of tension between the laity and their ecclesiastical rulers. Dr. Poynter coming fresh to the controversy, brought to it a new attitude. His unfeigned admiration for the old Catholics prompted him to meet them in a sympathetic spirit, and he trusted to his own personal influence to restrain them within the bounds of orthodoxy, and eventually to win them over to a more desirable

state of feeling towards their ecclesiastical rulers. He looked upon Milner's unceasing animosity as steadily exasperating his opponents, and likely in the end to lead to something approaching to a schism between the clergy and laity. Milner, on the other hand, who was ten years the older man, having already borne the brunt of the battle, was ready to continue to fight: to his mind, Dr. Poynter's attitude was fraught with the danger of temporising. To-day we shall probably feel that both men were alike necessary to fight God's battle in their different ways, and the result of the work of either without the other to supplement as well as restrain it, would have been wanting in completeness. These controversies, however, together with Dr. Milner's differences with the other vicars apostolic, who were his seniors, belong to succeeding years: we can end here with the more peaceful and touching incident of the ceremony at St. Edmund's in which Bishops Poynter and Milner were prominent figures kneeling before the altar, and the other three vicars apostolic were ministers of the sacred rite. On that day all was peace and harmony. Milner in describing it says that "The happy meeting of the four VV. AA., the Coadjutor Prelate, and of so many respectable priests, gave occasion to the holding of a regular synod, in which many things regarding religion were settled with perfect unanimity." [1]

The resolutions adopted by the Synod at Winchester and Old Hall have already been published.[2] They were the first systematic attempt at constructive legislation on ecclesiastical affairs since the passing of the Act which made Catholics free, and for the first time also after the late disputes, we see the vicars apostolic of all the four districts united once more in common council about the affairs of the Church in England. With this picture of peace in the present, and hopefulness for the future, we can conclude our consideration of the events which succeeded the Act of 1791.

[1] *Sup. Mem.* p. 111.

[2] See *History of St. Edmund's College*, x., Appendix E. A fuller account, containing minutes of all proceedings of the Synod, is preserved among the Archives at Ushaw.

APPENDIX A.

EXTRACT FROM THE MINUTE BOOK OF THE CATHOLIC COMMITTEES CONTAINING THE MEMORIALS TO LORD ROCKINGHAM AND LORD SHELBURNE RESPECTIVELY.

(Brit. Mus. Add. MS. 7961, Plut. cxxiv. F.)

At a meeting of the Catholic Committee on the 11th of June, 1782, all the Committee present—

It was moved in consequence of Lord George Gordon's application to Lord Shelburne and his Lordship's answer, that Lord Stourton, Lord Petre and Mr. Stapleton should wait upon Lord Rockingham and Mr. Fox, with the following Memorial.

To the Marquis of Rockingham &c. &c. &c.

13 *June*, 1782.

Lord Stourton, Lord Petre and Mr. Stapleton waited on Lord Rockingham, to acquaint his Lordship that a General Meeting of the Catholic Nobility and Gentry in London had been held; and lest what passed there should be misrepresented, they take the liberty to inform his Lordship that they met purely to take into consideration their private concerns.

They beg leave at the same time to mention to his Lordship the disagreeable situation in which they now find themselves, from the late application of Lord George Gordon in the name of the set of men whom he calls The Protestant Association; as they imagine it must unavoidably tend to keep up that animosity which they see with the deepest regret still subsists in some minds against them: though from their Oath they have taken, as well as from a conduct perfectly conformable to it, and to every duty of good subjects, they flattered themselves they had given every demonstration in their power of being sincere well-wishers of their country.

And they beg leave to submit to his Lordship's consideration, if some measures might not be adopted to prevent the further fomenting of these prejudices: especially as they seem to be raised mainly to increase that odium, under which they have so unjustly laboured; and to prevent the unanimity, now so necessary, and so much desired by them and by all true lovers of their country and its constitution.

The above, we hope, will meet with your Lordship's approbation. But in this, as in all other concerns, it shall be our wish to rely on your Lordship and the rest of your friends, whose goodness and attention, as well as other oppressed people, we have already experienced, being also thoroughly satisfied that our welfare cannot be in better hands than in those who are uniformly actuated by the great principles of justice and liberty, and consequently must be friends to universal Toleration.

It was moved that Lord Stourton, Lord Petre and Mr. Stapleton should wait upon Lord Shelburne with the following memorial.

To the Right Honourable The Lord Shelburne, one of His Majesty's Princ[l] Secretaries of State.

The Memorial of the R[t] Honble. Cha[s] Lord Stourton, Robt. Edwd. Lord Petre, John Courtenay Throckmorton Esqre., Thos. Stapleton Esqre. and Thos. Hornyold Esqre. for themselves and others of his Majesty's Subjects professing the Roman Catholic Religion.

Sheweth

That it is impossible for them not to feel the greatest uneasiness at finding a Body, not authorized by Law, and which has been, already, the cause of so many disorders, attempting, in a sort of corporate capacity, to appear before Ministers, and to desire their assistance, in beginning a persecution against them.

That your Memorialists have taken such Oaths as the wisdom of the legislature has thought fit to prescribe to them, as a proof of their allegiance, and they are therefore entitled to the protection of government.

That they do not consider themselves, nor can they patiently suffer that others should consider them, as proper objects of penal laws; being noblemen and gentlemen of ancient and respectable families, and of the most blameless and unexceptionable behaviour in their several counties. They are exceedingly alarmed at finding any countenance given to the malice of persons, whose conduct has not (to say no worse of it) been, in any degree, so free from just ground of reprehension, as theirs.

That a declaration in your Lordship's Letter, to the following effect, has added much to their uneasiness:

"That the acts of parliament remaining on the Statute-books, will be sufficient to prevent the success of any attempt, so to misconstrue that act of parliament, as to make it an engine in the hands of any emissary of the Church of Rome to the prejudice of the Protestant Religion".

That when the Act of the 18th of the King passed, though they could not consider the other Statutes as actually repealed by it, yet they had strong reason to hope they were consigned to oblivion, and in effect (whatever the strict legal construction might be) fallen into disuse.

But the efficacy your Lordship's letter supposes in the remaining Statutes, and the terms in which you describe the cases wherein they may operate, are a cause of very great alarm to them. It is not easy to understand what is meant by an emissary of the Church of Rome, or what shall be considered as a misconstruction of the Act; much less what will be looked upon as an attempt to misconstrue it, or what will be deemed to be a prejudice to the Protestant Religion. But if under such dubious terms, and in cases so uncertainly defined, the ancient persecuting laws are to be revived, and to be let loose upon them or are to be considered as by any means useful for securing their allegiance to the Crown and Constitution, they must regard their condition as very deplorable, and must feel the Act of the 18th of the King as a cruel imposition upon them, and by no means a benefit of any sort whatever.

That those of their persuasion are very numerous in the lower stations of the Fleet and Army, in which they have done good service under every discouragement, and the late supply of men, offered so largely and liberally by Ireland, will not, they are afraid, be got with the same facility, nor the Armies of Great Britain be kept up, on the footing they ardently wish, if those of the Catholic Persuasion, the moment they arrive in England, are to be considered as bad Subjects, and liable upon any construction, to the dreadful penalties which are enacted in the laws remaining in the Statute Book.

That the Roman Catholics of England are as good Subjects as those of Ireland, or any persons of any description in any country whatsoever—If any crime or even just cause of suspicion, can be imputed to them, they desire it should be charged and punished; if not, that they should not be menaced with the revival of laws, whose severity is universally acknowledged to be extreme, and by no means merited by them, so as to cause them to be distinguished from all the descriptions of men, who, in the present liberality of the age, are so amply protected in every country about them.

They ask pardon for the anxiety they express on this occasion. They have reason to be convinced, that their former neglect of the malicious and unprovoked machinations of bad men against them upon a late occasion has been productive of great mischief to them, and even to the public; and they owe it both to the public and themselves to do all in their power, to resist the renewal of such designs in their beginnings.

APPENDIX B.

ADDRESS OF THE CATHOLIC COMMITTEE BEFORE ITS DISSOLUTION IN MAY 1787.

(See Chapter vi.)

To The English Catholics.

Gentlemen,

Your Committee would have felt themselves happy, if previous to the expiration of their appointment, they had had it in their power to inform you, that they had been more successful in their endeavours to obtain a relaxation of those penal laws and disabilities which are still so strongly felt.—They flatter themselves, however, that no endeavours have been wanting on their part, to forward an event, so just in itself and so congenial to the spirit of toleration, which they have the pleasure to behold pervading every society of Christians.—They have not neglected to hold up to the observation of the people, the conduct of foreign nations, as breathing a very different spirit to that which has been exhibited in this kingdom. Every circumstance, that appeared in foreign prints favourable to toleration, has been published in the English papers. They have given great attention to preserving the friendship of liberal men, able and willing advocates for religious liberty, not neglecting to solicit support from the leaders of public business, when the times would again permit them to appear before their country, praying redress of grievances. They flatter themselves these measures have not been without that degree of success, which in a short time will appear in its effects. They have, as they informed you by letter some time past, made an application this year to be relieved from an annual fine, which is imposed upon all those of our persuasion; and it is with pleasure they can assure you, that from the encouragement received, they may flatter themselves with a probability of succeeding at no very distant period.

Your Committee would think themselves deficient in the attention they owe to you, if they did not take this opportunity of pointing out the chief objects, which we ought to have in view, in our endeavours to obtain relief from our present grievances.

The laws which are now in force against us, are many of them

penal; by which, upon an information being laid, we are liable to suffer very severe penalties, and, on some occasions even death itself, for the practice of our religion. Others of these laws operate as *disabilities*, by requiring from every subject, as requisite for the enjoyments of the rights of citizens, oaths which we have uniformly refused to take, as inconsistent with our religious principles. The first species of these laws do not appear to be a subject of great apprehension in these times; an attempt to inflict a penalty upon a person for the mere practice of his religion, would in this age operate in the most beneficial manner; the public would no longer suffer those laws to disgrace the statute book of this country, which are now only left there because they are considered as a dead letter.

Your Committee beg therefore to point out principally to your consideration, our situation in consequence of the disabilities arising from the imposition of the above mentioned oaths. By these oaths we are excluded from every place, or emolument in the power of government to bestow, and deprived of every means of serving our country, or fellow-subjects, in any manner for which our different situations in life might capacitate us; we are in short, by the operation of these laws, deprived of many of our most valuable rights, which form the excellence of the British Constitution.—

Difficult as it may appear to obtain any relief from laws, which have been so long enacted, and which, from their nature, put themselves in execution; yet on several accounts, your Committee beg leave to observe, that they cannot think it an object which should be viewed with a desponding eye. The progressive state of toleration throughout Europe, particularly in those countries where our religion is established, affords some ground of hope that the same benign influence will soon spread itself over this Island. Without wishing to make any invidious comparison between ourselves and any society of Christians, we may confidently challenge this, or any other nation, to produce a body of men, whose conduct in every respect will bear a stricter scrutiny; whose allegiance to government, and attachment to country are more sincere; in a word, who are in all regards, better subjects or better citizens. To this we may add that the cause of our present unmerited situation, is the quality which is the most desirable to society, and the most valuable in man; namely, an inviolable attachment to truth and the sacredness of oaths.

The nature of the oaths, the refusal of which is the cause of our present situation, affords a considerable ray of hope, that we shall one day be emancipated from those restrictions to which they subject us. Were they such as could give any security of allegiance or good conduct, or were they the renunciation of any doctrines or opinions

which could affect the welfare of society, it is well known we should be the foremost to take them ; instead of which they give no security for the good conduct of the person who takes them, but are merely a renunciation of speculative doctrines, and are a yoke on the minds of all men, which nothing but prejudices early imbibed against us could make them bear : these prejudices are perceptibly wearing away, and there is every reason to presume, that a steady perseverance in our good conduct, and the good sense of our fellow subjects, must at length totally overcome prejudices, which are founded in ignorance of our real principles.

Your Committee would think themselves deficient in the attention they owe to your concerns, if they did not point out to you those measures which they think would conduce to the benefit of the body of Catholics ; for which reason, they beg leave to draw your attention to the nature of our Church Government in this country.

From the death of those Catholic Bishops who were deprived of their Sees at the establishment of the Reformation, the regular succession of our Prelates has totally ceased, and we have since been governed not by *Diocesan* Bishops, but by Superiors commissioned from Rome under different denominations ; at present we are governed by four Bishops, who are appointed under the denomination of Vicars Apostolic, from which quality they derive their sole authority. They are appointed by the Court of Rome, without any election either by the Clergy or Laity ; their power is curtailed or enlarged at the will of the Court of Rome, and revocable by the same Court. This necessarily creates an appearance of dependence on the Court of Rome, which is generally represented to be much greater than it really is. But we beg leave to observe, that the Ecclesiastical Government by Vicars Apostolic is by no means essential to our religion, and that it is not only contrary to the primitive practice of the Church, but is in direct opposition to the statutes of praemunire and provisors, enacted in times, when the Catholic, was the established religion of this country ; and when you reflect that it is the duty of Christians to make the discipline of their Church to conform, as near as may be, to the laws of their country, your Committee doubt not but that you will concur with them in thinking, that it is incumbent on us, to use our endeavours to procure the nomination of Bishops in Ordinary.—

Your Committee think it would be needless to point out to you, the advantages which would result, from having pastors thus chosen by the flock they are to teach and direct, and in conjunction with which, they would be competent to regulate every part of the national Church discipline.

The inconveniences attending our present system, have not been felt in so strong a manner as they might have been; owing to the spirit of meekness and forbearance, which has characterised those, who have been invested with the authority before mentioned; but it must be observed that the system is not for that less defective; wherefore your Committee trust that you will concur with them in thinking it necessary, to appoint a certain number of your body, who may be entrusted to co-operate with your Clergy, in taking the most effectual means to free them and us from our present defective system, and establish the Church-government, in a manner more comformable to the general practice of the Christian religion.

Your Committee considering it their duty to point out to you those things which they think would be of national benefit, beg leave to suggest to you the propriety of establishing a school upon a proper foundation. At present there is no School in this country, except for very young boys, who are placed there for a short time, previous to being sent to some place of education on the continent; by which means all those who are destined by their parents for business, who are a considerable number, are deprived of a proper education; that received at any School on the Continent, being evidently ill calculated for such as are intended for business in this country. They therefore beg leave to propose to you the settling of a School, which shall afford a system of education, proper for those who are destined for civil or commercial life, not to interfere with the education abroad, unless by rising as circumstances will permit, from it's infant state to that degree of eminence, as shall in future times become adequate to all purposes, more advantageous to religion and to the body of Catholics, than the present Foreign School establishments.

The necessary expenses attending such an institution, may, it is hoped, be easily supplied by general contributions from those, who are convinced of the benefits which would result from it. It would be needless, at present, to point out any particular mode for the direction of such a school; this must evidently be committed in a great measure, to a certain number of trustees periodically chosen by the subscribers.

Your Committee flatter themselves, it will be needless to suggest any thing farther relative to our situation in this country, to prove the necessity of our taking some preparatory steps to facilitate the obtaining the relief we naturally sigh after. Your Committee therefore think it incumbent on them not to conclude this address, before they state (with all deference) their sentiments on the further method of attending to the interests of our body.

They beg leave to observe, that on the first Thursday in May

next, when a General Meeting is as usual, to be held in London, their appointment and trust expire. That the business of the repeal of the double Land Tax is yet pending :—That the times are producing daily in all nations marks of general toleration in religious matters :—That few ministers can be expected to attend, unsolicited, to the sufferings of a small body, which can neither hurt nor serve them :—That experience has proved, if the charge of conducting any transaction is not given to the care of some one or more persons, that it has little probability of ever being accomplished :—That an unremitting attention and attendance are necessary, to secure the success of public undertakings, particularly, those of such a nature as the attempts to remove our present grievances :—That it is essential to be prepared, instantly to seize the favourable moment, when the times or circumstances present it :—They conceive it is impossible to reflect on the above lines, and not consent to the proposition, that some kind of deputation or commission, should be given to a few or many of the Catholic body to watch over their public interests.

Nothing but good can arise from such an appointment. Whether the Committee or Deputation should continue in its present form ;—Whether it should consist of few or many ;—Whether a subscription should attend it as at present ;—Whether it should take the form of a club or any other shape ?—are questions for the consideration of the General Meeting to be held the 3rd of May next :—Which it must be the ardent wish of everyone, should be as numerous as possible.

On these last points the Committee think it would ill become them to speak, except as individuals, on the day of the General Meeting. Thus far they hope,—that it will not be improper to assure the Catholics at large, that no Gentlemen ever acted and debated with more zeal, more unanimity at their meetings, than they have constantly done ; and that in no point are they more united, than in thinking some form of Deputation or Committee should be appointed, to take advantage of the universal benevolence which seems to be spreading in all parts of Europe, during a profound and universal peace, when all nations seem to be laying aside ancient prejudices, and by treaties of amity, increasing the intercourse between men of different religions.

The Committee will be extremely happy should their conduct meet with the approbation of the Catholics at large : sensible that they have given most constant, and watchful attention to the interests of the body, they impatiently wait for that flattering circumstance, which if fortunate enough to obtain, they shall esteem a lasting honour.

If any Gentleman, not being able to attend in person, should be desirous of communicating his sentiments on the above subjects, any

letter he may transmit to the Committee will, if he desires it, be laid before the General Meeting.

Many Gentlemen not having it in their power to attend the General Meeting, when the accounts will be laid before it, and the Committee thinking it might be agreeable to a great number of them to be acquainted with the state of the subscription, it is hoped the publication of it will not be deemed improper.

We have the honour to be, Gentlemen,

Your most obedient humble Servants.

STOURTON,
PETRE,
HENRY ENGLEFIELD,
JOHN THROCKMORTON,
WILLIAM FERMOR,
THOMAS HORNYOLD,
WILLIAM JONES,
JOHN TOWNELEY,
THOMAS STAPLETON,

LONDON, *April* 10, 1787.

STATE OF THE GENERAL ACCOUNT.

Total yearly amount	307 13 0		
Total amount of the same for 5 years	1,538 5 0		
Total received	667 16 0		
Total arrears due	£870 9 0		
Total received		667 16 0	
Total expended		107 4 10	
In hand		560 11 2	
Arrears		870 9 0	
		£1,431 0 2	

APPENDIX C.

OBSERVATIONS ON THE PURPORT, GROUNDS, EFFECTS AND CONSEQUENCES OF THE INTENDED APPLICATION OF THE ENGLISH CATHOLICS TO PARLIAMENT FOR RELIEF.[1]

THE Laws in force against the English Catholics may be regarded under four different Classes:—

1st Those which subject them to Penalties & Punishments for *Exercising their Religious Worship:* under which class may be ranked the Laws against their Colleges, Seminaries and Priests.

2nd The Laws which punish them for not conforming to the Established Church: these are generally called the *Statutes of Recusancy.*

3rd The Laws which disable them from holding *Offices;* from *serving* in the *Navy* and *Army;* from practising the *Law* and *Physic;* and from *voting at Elections.*

4th The Laws which affect their *Landed Property.*

With respect to the *First Class,*

The Catholics are sensible of the extreme hardships of these Laws; they feel their bitter, though indirect, operation, on almost every action of their Lives. But they do not now particularly solicit the attention of the Legislature, to this part of their Grievances.

With respect to the *Second Class,*

It should be observed that absence from Church, and unaccompanied by any other Act, constitutes Recusancy.

Till the Stat. of 35th Eliz[th] Chap. 2, All Dissenters were considered as Recusants and were all equally subject to the Penalties of Recusancy. That Statute was the first Penal Statute made against Popish Recusants by that name; and as distinguished from other Recusants. From that Statute arise the distinction between Protestant Dissenters and Popish Dissenters. The former were subject to such Statutes of Recusancy as preceded that of the 35th of Queen Elizabeth and to some Statutes against Recusancy made subsequent

[1] Prepared by Mr. Charles Butler, in pursuance of a resolution passed by the Catholic Committee on May 8, 1788. See the Committee's Minute Book (Brit. Mus. Add. MS. 7961), pp. 111-15.

to that time, till they were relieved from them all, by the Act of Toleration in the 3rd year of King William's Reign.

By the Statutes of Recusancy against Popish Recusants, Convicts are punishable by the Censures of the Church, and by a fine of 20l. for every month, during which they absent themselves from Church; —They are disabled from holding offices or Employments;—From keeping Arms in their Houses;—From maintaining Actions or Suits at Law or in Equity;—From being Executors or Guardians;—From presenting to advowsons—From practising the Law or Physic; and from holding offices, Civil or Military;—They are subject to the Penalties attending Excommunication;—they are not permitted to travel five miles from home, unless by license, upon pain of forfeiting all their Goods;—They may not come to Court under pain of 100l.; —a married Woman when convicted of Recusancy, shall forfeit Two-thirds of her Dower or Jointure—she cannot be Executrix or Administratrix to her Husband; nor have any parts of his goods; & during her Marriage she may be kept in Prison, unless her Husband redeems her at the rate of 10l. a month or the 3rd part of his Lands; —Popish Recusant convicts must, within 3 Months after conviction, either submit and renounce their Errors; or if required by four Justices, must abjure and renounce the Realm; and if they do not depart, or if they return without License, they are guilty of Felony, and suffer Death as Felons. It materially increases the disgusting severity of these Laws, that the most ordinary Justice of the Peace, may convict a Catholic of Recusancy, by a Summary Process of a few minutes, and thereby subject him to their Operation, in their utmost rigour.

From these Penalties the English Catholics solicit to be relieved: It is to be observed, that, the disabilities attending Recusancy, make the Repeal of these Statutes a necessary step, towards the Relief which the Catholics now solicit. For, if all the other Acts in force against them were repealed, the Catholics would still continue subject to the heaviest Penalties and Disabilities, from the Statutes of Recusancy alone. Those Statutes alone, would preclude them from the Navy, the Army, the Law, and the Practice of Physic;—Those statutes therefore must be repealed, before the Catholics can receive any substantial Relief.

As to the *Third Class*,

The English Catholics solicit to serve and to have rank in the Army and Navy, to practise the Law; but they do not solicit to hold any offices of the Law or any other Civil office or Employment.

They solicit to be allowed to vote at Elections. They say, that to be represented in Parliament is the Birth-right of every Englishman; of this, the nation at large is so sensible, that it may be doubted

whether the Catholics would not appear blameable in their Eyes, if asking for anything, they did not particularly and earnestly ask for the right of voting at Elections.

As to The *Fourth Class*,

The only law affecting their Landed Property, which the Catholics solicit to have removed is the Obligation imposed on them of Inrolling their Deeds. This is always a heavy expense ; Sometimes it is a cruel hardship on them, as it obliges them to disclose Transactions, the disclosure of which is not only unpleasant but injurious to them ;—Besides, it is a grievance on the Protestant part of his Majesty's Subjects. For, if a Protestant Mortgages his Estate to a Catholic ; or conveys it to a Catholic in trust, he cannot have the Estate reconveyed to him, but by a Deed inrolled, the Expense of which, in this case falls upon the Protestant.

These are the Principal *Points* to which the Catholics now solicit the attention of the Legislature. It is obvious, that, if they obtain the relief they seek for in *all* of them, they will still be in a situation very inferior to that of the rest of his Majesty's Subjects. The Exercise of their Religion will continue prohibited to them under severe penalties ; they will remain disabled to present to any Ecclesiastical Living or Benefice ; They will remain ineligible to all Civil offices ;—disqualified from holding any place in his Majesty's Household ;—and excluded from a Seat in the House of Commons—Their Peers will remain deprived of their Right to a seat in the House of Lords and their Priests will remain exposed to heavy Penalties and Punishments.

APPENDIX D.

QUERIES REFERRED BY DESIRE OF MR. PITT TO THE SIX CATHOLIC UNIVERSITIES OF PARIS, DOUAY, LOUVAIN, ALCALA, SALAMANCA, AND VALLADOLID, WITH ABSTRACTS OF THEIR ANSWERS.[1]

The Queries.

1. Has the Pope, or Cardinals, or any body of men, or any individual of the Church of Rome, any civil authority, power, jurisdiction, or pre-eminence whatsoever, within the realm of England?

2. Can the Pope, or Cardinals, or any body of men, or any individual of the Church of Rome, absolve or dispense his Majesty's subjects from their oath of allegiance, upon any pretext whatsoever?

3. Is there any principle in the tenets of the Catholic Faith, by which Catholics are justified in not keeping faith with Heretics, or other persons differing from them in religious opinions, in any transaction, either of a public or a private nature?

Abstract from the answer of the Sacred Faculty of Divinity of Paris to the above Queries.

After an introduction, according to the usual forms of the university, they answer the first query by declaring:—

Neither the Pope, nor the Cardinals, nor any body of men, nor any other person of the Church of Rome hath any civil authority, civil power, civil jurisdiction, or civil pre-eminence whatsoever in any kingdom; and, consequently, none in the kingdom of England, by reason or virtue of any authority, power, jurisdiction, or pre-eminence by divine institution inherent in, or granted, or by any other means belonging to the Pope, or the Church of Rome. This doctrine the Sacred Faculty of Divinity, of Paris, has always held, and upon every occasion maintained, and upon every occasion has rigidly proscribed the contrary doctrines from her schools.

[1] The abstracts are taken from Lord Petre's letter to Dr. Horsley, pp. 34-44. A translation of the answers in full can be found in Butler's *Historical Memoirs*, vol. i., pp. 439-482.

Answer to the second query—Neither the Pope, nor the Cardinals, nor any body of men, nor any person of the Church of Rome, can, by virtue of the keys, absolve or free the subjects of the King of England from their oath of allegiance.

This and the first query are so intimately connected, that the answer to the first immediately and naturally applies to the second, &c.

Answer to the third query—There is no tenet in the Catholic Church, by which Catholics are justified in not keeping faith with Heretics, or those who differ from them in matters of religion. The tenet, that it is lawful to break faith with Heretics, is so repugnant to common honesty and the opinions of Catholics, that there is nothing of which those who have defended the Catholic Faith against Protestants have complained more heavily, than the malice and calumny of their adversaries in imputing this tenet to them, &c. &c. &c.

Given at Paris in the General Assembly of the Sorbonne, held on Thursday the 11th day before the calends of March 1789.

Signed in due form.

University of Doway.

Jan. 5, 1789.

At a meeting of the Faculty of Divinity of the University of Doway, &c. &c.

To the first and second queries the Sacred Faculty answers—That no power whatsoever, in civil or temporal concerns, was given by the Almighty, either to the Pope, the Cardinals, or the Church herself, and, consequently, that Kings and Sovereigns are not, in temporal concerns, subject, by the ordination of God, to any ecclesiastical power whatsoever; neither can their subjects, by any authority granted to the Pope, or the Church, from above, be freed from their obedience, or absolved from their oath of allegiance.

This is the doctrine which the professors of divinity hold and teach in our schools, and this all the candidates for degrees in divinity maintain in their public theses, &c. &c. &c.

To the third question the Sacred Faculty answers—That there is no principle of the Catholic Faith, by which Catholics are justified in not keeping faith with Heretics, who differ from them in religious opinions. On the contrary, it is the unanimous doctrine of Catholics, that the respect due to the name of God so called to witness, requires that the oath be inviolably kept, to whomsoever it is pledged, whether Catholic, Heretic, or Infidel, &c. &c. &c.

Signed and sealed in due form.

University of Louvain.

The Faculty of Divinity at Louvain, having been requested to give her opinion upon the questions above stated, does it with readiness—but struck with astonishment that such questions should, at the end of the eighteenth century, be proposed to any learned Body, by inhabitants of a kingdom that glories in the talents and discernment of its natives. The Faculty being assembled for the above purpose, it is agreed with the unanimous assent of all voices to answer to the first and second queries absolutely in the negative.

The Faculty does not think it incumbent upon her in this place to enter upon the proofs of her opinion, or to show how it is supported by passages in the Holy Scriptures, or the writings of antiquity. That has already been done by Bossuet, De Marca, the two Barclays, Goldastus, the Pithaeuses, Argentre, Widrington, and his Majesty King James the First, in his Dissertations against Bellarmin and Du Perron, and by many others, &c. &c. &c.

The Faculty then proceeds to declare that the sovereign power of the state is in no wise (not even indirectly as it is termed) subject to, or dependent upon, any other power; though it be a spiritual power, or even though it be instituted for eternal salvation, &c. &c.

That no man, nor any assembly of men, however eminent in dignity and power, not even the whole body of the Catholic Church, though assembled in general council, can, upon any ground or pretence whatsoever, weaken the bond of union between the sovereign and the people; still less can they absolve or free the subjects from their Oath of Allegiance.

Proceeding to the third question, the said Faculty of Divinity (in perfect wonder that such a question should be proposed to her) most positively and unequivocally answers—That there is not, and that there never has been, among the Catholics, or in the doctrines of the Church of Rome, any law or principle which makes it lawful for Catholics to break their faith with Heretics, or others of a different persuasion from themselves in matters of Religion, either in public or private concerns.

The Faculty declares the doctrine of Catholics to be, that the Divine and Natural Law, which makes it a duty to keep faith and promises, is the same; and is neither shaken nor diminished, if those with whom the engagement is made, hold erroneous opinions in matters of religion, &c. &c.

Signed in due form on the 18th of November, 1788.

University of Alcala.

To the first question it is answered—That none of the persons mentioned in the proposed question, either individually, or collectively

in council assembled, have any right in civil matters; but that all civil power, jurisdiction and pre-eminence are derived from inheritance, election, the consent of the people, and other such titles of that nature.

To the second it is answered, in like manner—That none of the persons above-mentioned have a power to absolve the subjects of his Brittanic Majesty from their Oaths of Allegiance.

To the third question it is answered—That the Doctrine which would exempt Catholics from the obligation of keeping faith with Heretics, or with any other persons who dissent from them in matters of religion, instead of being an article of Catholic Faith, is entirely repugnant to its tenets.

Signed in the usual form, March 17th, 1789.

University of Salamanca.

To the first question it is answered—That neither Pope, nor Cardinals, nor any assembly or individual of the Catholic Church, have, as such, any civil authority, power, jurisdiction or pre-eminence in the kingdom of England.

To the second it is answered—That neither Pope, nor Cardinals, nor any assembly or individual of the Catholic Church, can, as such, absolve the subjects of Great Britain from their Oaths of Allegiance, or dispense with its (*sic*) obligations.

To the third it is answered—That it is no article of Catholic Faith that Catholics are not bound to keep faith with Heretics, or with persons of any other description, who dissent from them in matters of religion.

Signed in the usual form, March 7th, 1789.

University of Valladolid.

To the First question it is answered—That neither Pope, Cardinals, or even a General Council, have any authority, power, jurisdiction or pre-eminence, directly or indirectly, in the kingdom of Great Britain; or over any other kingdom or province in which they possess no temporal dominion.

To the second it is answered—That neither Pope nor Cardinals, nor even a General Council, can absolve the subjects of Great Britain from their Oaths of Allegiance, or dispense with their obligation.

To the Third it is answered—That the obligation of keeping faith is grounded on the law of nature, which binds all men equally, without respect to their religious opinions; and, with regard to Catholics, it is still more cogent, as it is confirmed by the principles of their religion.

Signed in the usual form, February 17th, 1789.

APPENDIX E.

FORMS OF OATH OF ALLEGIANCE &C. PROPOSED AT DIFFERENT TIMES TO CATHOLICS.

(*a*) Oath of Allegiance Enacted in the Third Year of James I. (1606).[1]

I, A. B., do truly and sincerely acknowledge, profess, testify, and declare in my conscience, before God and the world, that our sovereign lord king James is lawful and rightful king of this realm, and of all other his majesty's dominions and countries; and that the pope, neither of himself, nor by any authority of the church or see of Rome, or by any other means with any other, hath any power or authority to depose the king, or to dispose of any of his majesty's kingdoms or dominions, or to authorise any foreign prince to invade or annoy him or his countries, or to discharge any of his subjects of their allegiance and obedience to his majesty, or to give license or leave to any of them to bear arms, raise tumults, or to offer any violence or hurt to his majesty's royal person, state, or government, or to any of his majesty's subjects, within his majesty's dominions.

Also I do swear from my heart that, notwithstanding any declaration or sentence of excommunication or deprivation, made or granted, or to be made or granted, by the pope or his successors, or by any authority derived, or pretended to be derived, from him or his see, against the said king, his heirs or successors, or any absolution of the said subjects from their obedience, I will bear faith and true allegiance to his majesty, his heirs and successors, and him and them will defend, to the uttermost of my power, against all conspiracies and attempts whatsoever, which shall be made against his or their persons, their crown and dignity, by reason or colour of any such sentence or declaration or otherwise; and will do my best endeavour to disclose and make known unto his majesty, his heirs and successors, all treasons and traitorous conspiracies, which I shall know or hear of, to be against him, or any of them.

And I do further swear that I do, from my heart, abhor, detest,

[1] Dodd's *Church History*, by Tierney, iv., p. cxvii.

and abjure, as impious and heretical, this damnable doctrine and position,—that princes, which be excommunicated by the pope, may be deposed or murdered by their subjects, or any other whatsoever.

And I do believe, and in my conscience am resolved, that neither the pope, nor any other person whatsoever, hath power to absolve me from this oath, or any part thereof, which I acknowledge by good and full authority to be lawfully ministered unto me, and do renounce all pardons and dispensations to the contrary.

And these things I do plainly and sincerely acknowledge and swear, according to these express words by me spoken, and according to the plain and common sense and understanding of the same words, without any equivocation, or mental evasion, or secret reservation whatsoever: And I do make this recognition and acknowledgement heartily, willingly, and truly, upon the true faith of a christian. So help me God.

Oath of Allegiance &c. in the Irish Act of 1774.

I, A. B., take Almighty God and his only son Jesus Christ my Redeemer, to witness, that I will be faithful and bear true allegiance to our most gracious Sovereign Lord King George the Third and him will defend to the utmost of my power against all conspiracies and attempts whatever that shall be made against his person, crown, and dignity; and I will do my utmost endeavour to disclose and make known to his majesty, and his heirs, all treasons and traitorous conspiracies which may be found against him or them; and I do faithfully promise to maintain, support and defend, to the utmost of my power, the succession of the crown in his majesty's family, against any person or persons whatsoever; hereby utterly renouncing and abjuring any obedience or allegiance unto the person taking upon himself the stile and title of Prince of Wales in the lifetime of his father, and who since his death is said to have assumed the stile and title of King of Great Britain and Ireland by the name of Charles the Third, and to any other persons claiming or pretending a right to the crown of these realms; and I do swear that I do reject and detest as unchristian and impious to believe, that it is lawful to murder or destroy any person or persons whatsoever for or under pretence of their being heretics; and also that unchristian and impious principle, that no faith is to be kept with heretics; I further declare that it is no article of my faith, and that I do renounce, reject and abjure the opinion, that princes excommunicated of the Pope and Council, or by any authority of the See of Rome, or by any authority whatsoever, may be deposed or murdered by their subjects, or by any person whatsoever; and I do promise that I will not hold, maintain or abet any such

opinion, or any other opinions contrary to what is expressed in this declaration; and I do declare that I do not believe the Pope of Rome, or any other foreign prince, prelate, state or potentate, hath or ought to have any temporal or civil jurisdiction, power, superiority or pre-eminence, directly or indirectly, within this realm; and I do solemnly in the presence of God and His only Son Jesus Christ my Redeemer, profess, testify and declare that I do make this declaration and every part thereof in the plain and ordinary sense of the words of this oath without any evasion, equivocation or mental reservation whatever, and without any dispensation already granted by the Pope, or any authority of the See of Rome, or any person whatever; and without thinking that I am or can be acquitted before God or man, or absolved of this declaration or any part thereof, although the Pope or any other person or persons or authority whatsoever shall dispense with or annul the same, or declare that it was null and void from the beginning. So help me God.

Oath in the English Act of 1778.

I, A. B., do sincerely promise and swear that I will be faithful and bear true allegiance to His Majesty George the Third, and him will defend to the utmost of my power, against all conspiracies and attempts whatever that shall be made against his person, crown or dignity; and I will do my utmost to endeavour to disclose and make known to his Majesty, his heirs and successors, all treasons and traitorous conspiracies which may be formed against him or them; and I do faithfully promise to maintain, support and defend to the utmost of my power, the succession of the crown in his Majesty's family, against any person or persons whatsoever; hereby utterly renouncing and abjuring any obedience or allegiance unto the person taking upon himself the stile and title of Prince of Wales, in the lifetime of his father, and who since his death is said to have assumed the stile and title of King of Great Britain, by the name of Charles the Third, or to any other person claiming or pretending a right to the crown of these realms; and I do swear that I do reject and detest, as an unchristian and impious position, that it is lawful to murder or destroy any person or persons whatsoever, for or under pretence of their being heretics; and also that unchristian and impious principle, that no faith is to be kept with heretics: I further declare that it is no article of my faith, and that I do renounce, reject and abjure the opinion that Princes excommunicated by the Pope and Council, or any authority of the See of Rome, or any authority whatsoever, may be deposed or murdered by their subjects, or any other person whatsoever: and I do declare that I do not believe that the Pope of Rome, or any other foreign

prince, prelate, state or potentate, hath or ought to have any civil or temporal jurisdiction, power, superiority or pre-eminence, directly or indirectly, within this realm. And I do solemnly in the presence of God profess, testify and declare that I do make this declaration and every part thereof, in the plain and ordinary sense of the words of this Oath; without any evasion, equivocation or mental reservation whatever, and without any dispensation already granted by the Pope, or any authority of the See of Rome, or any person whatever; and without thinking that I am or can be acquitted before God or man, or absolved of this declaration, or any part thereof, although the Pope or any other persons or authority whatsoever shall dispense with or annul the same, or declare that it was null or void.

OATH OF ALLEGIANCE AND ABJURATION AND OF PROTESTATION AND DECLARATION IN THE RELIEF BILL AS ORIGINALLY DRAFTED IN 1788, SHOWING THE ALTERATIONS MADE AT THE MEETING ON FEBRUARY 3, 1790.[1]

I, A. B., do sincerely promise and swear that I will be faithful and bear true Allegiance to Majesty and I do truly and sincerely acknowledge, profess, testify and declare in my Conscience before God and the World that our Sovereign is lawful and rightful of this Realm, and all other Majesty's Dominions thereunto belonging: And I do solemnly and sincerely declare that I do believe in my Conscience that not any Descendants of the Person who pretended to be Prince of *Wales* during the Life of the late King *James* the Second and after his Decease, pretended to be and took upon himself the Stile and Title of King of *England* by the Name of *James* the Third, or of *Scotland*, by the Name of *James* the Eighth, or the Stile and Title of King of *Great Britain*, hath any Right or Title whatsoever to the Crown of this Realm, or any Dominions thereunto belonging: And I do renounce, refuse and abjure any allegiance or obedience to any of them: And I do swear that I will bear faith and true allegiance to Majesty and will defend to the utmost of my Power against all traitorous Conspiracies and Attempts whatsoever which shall be made against Person, Crown or Dignity; and I will do my utmost endeavour to disclose and make known to Majesty and successors, all Treasons and traitorous Conspiracies which I shall know to be against : And I do faithfully and fully promise, to the utmost of my Power, to support, maintain and defend the Succession

[1] The following is taken from the copy of the 'Heads of the Bill' used by the Rev. J. Barnard at the meeting, and checked from a copy of the alterations supplied by Mr. Charles Butler a week later. The corrected clause is given in a slightly different form in Butler's *Historical Memoirs* (iv., p. 30).

of the Crown against the Descendants of the said *James* and against all other Persons whatsoever; which succession, by an act intitled, "An Act for the further Limitation of the Crown and better securing the Rights and Liberties of the Subject," is, and stands, limited to the Princess *Sophia*, Electress, and Duchess Dowager of *Hanover*, and the Heirs of her Body, being Protestants: And I do swear that I do from my Heart abhor, detest, and abjure, as impious and heretical, that damnable Doctrine and Position that Princes excommunicated by the Pope, or by authority of the See of *Rome*, may be deposed or murdered by their Subjects or any other persons whomsoever: and I do protest and declare and do solemnly swear it to be my most firm and sincere Opinion Belief and Persuasion that neither the Pope, nor any (A) General Council, nor any Priest, nor any Ecclesiastical Power whatsoever, can absolve the subjects of this Realm or any of them from their Allegiance to said Majesty: and that no Foreign Prince, Person, Prelate, State, or Potentate, hath or ought to have any civil Jurisdiction or Authority whatsoever within this Realm; or any Spiritual Authority Power or Jurisdiction, whatsoever, within this Realm, that can, directly or indirectly, affect, or interfere with, the Independence, Sovereignty, Laws, or Constitution of this Kingdom, or with the Civil or Ecclesiastical Government thereof, as by Law established, or with the Rights, Liberties, Persons or properties of the subjects thereof (B). And that no person can be absolved from any Sin nor any Sin whatever be forgiven at the Pleasure of any Pope, or of any Priest, or of any person whomsoever. (C) And that no Breach of Faith with, or Injury to, or Hostility against, any Person whomsoever, can ever be justified by Reason, or under Pretence, that such Person is an Heretic or an Infidel: And that, neither the Pope, nor any Prelate nor any Priest, nor any Assembly of Prelates or Priests, nor any Ecclesiastical Power whatever, can, at any Time, dispense with, or absolve me from, the Obligations of this Oath or of any other Oath, or of any Compact whatsoever: And I do also in my Conscience, declare and solemnly swear, That I acknowledge no Infallibility in the Pope: and all these things I do plainly and sincerely declare, acknowledge and swear, according to these express words by me spoken, and according to the plain and ordinary Sense of the same Words, without any Equivocation, mental Evasion or secret Reservation whatsoever: And I do make the aforesaid Protestation, Declaration, Recognition, Acknowledgment, Abjuration, Renunciation, Promise and Oath heartily, willingly and truly, upon the true Faith of a Christian. So help me God."

The following are the alterations made at the meeting on February 3, 1790, described in chapter xi. :—

Instead of the passage marked from (A) to (B), the following was substituted :—

"Prelate or Priest nor any Assembly of Prelates or Priests nor any Ecclesiastical Power whatsoever can absolve the Subjects of this Realm or any of them from their Allegiance to his said Majesty; and that no Foreign Church, Prelate or Priest or Assembly of Prelates or Priests or Ecclesiastical Power whatsoever hath or ought to have any Jurisdiction or Authority whatsoever within this Realm, that can directly or indirectly affect or interfere with the Independence, Sovereignty, Laws, Constitution or Government thereof, or with the Rights, Liberties, Persons or Properties of the People of the said Realm or any of them".

At the place marked (C) the following words were inserted: "but that sorrow for past offences, Resolution to avoid future guilt and Atonement to God and the injured neighbour are indispensably requisite to obtain forgiveness of sin."

Oath of Allegiance, Abjuration and Declaration prepared by the Vicars Apostolic.[1]

I, A.B., do sincerely promise and swear, that I will be faithful and bear true allegiance to his Majesty King George III. And I do truly and sincerely acknowledge, profess, testify and declare, in my conscience, before God and the world, that our Sovereign Lord George III &c. is lawful and rightful Sovereign of this realm, and all other his Majesty's dominions thereunto belonging: and I do solemnly and sincerely declare, that I do believe in my conscience that not any of the descendants of the person who pretended to be Prince of Wales during the life of the late King James the Second, and after his decease pretended to be and took upon himself the style and title of King of England by the name of James the Third, or of Scotland by the name of James the Eighth, or the style and title of King of Great Britain, hath any right or title whatsoever to the crown of this realm or any of the dominions thereunto belonging; and I do renounce refuse and abjure any allegiance or obedience to any of them; and I do swear that I will bear faith and true allegiance to his Majesty and will defend him to the utmost of my power against all traitorous conspiracies and attempts whatsoever, which shall be made against his person, crown or dignity; and I will do my utmost endeavour to disclose and make known to his Majesty and his successors all treasons and traitorous conspiracies which I shall know to be against him, and I do faithfully and fully promise, to the utmost of my power, to sup-

[1] Taken from the paper circulated by Milner in the House of Commons on March 8, 1791.

port, maintain, and defend the succession of the crown against the descendants of the said James, and against all other persons whatsoever; and I fully submit to and promise not to hinder or oppose the limitations contained in an Act entitled, *An Act for the further limitation of the crown, and better securing the rights and liberties of the subject*, by which the said succession is and stands limited to the Princess Sophia, Electress and Duchess Dowager of Hanover, and the heirs of her body, being Protestants.

And I do swear that I do from my heart abhor and abjure that impious, heretical and damnable doctrine and position, that princes excommunicated or deprived by the Pope or any authority of the See of Rome may be murdered by their subjects, or any other person whatsoever; also that false, scandalous, seditious, traitorous doctrine and position, that Princes excommunicated by the aforesaid Pope or authority of the See of Rome may be deposed by their subjects or any other person: And I do protest and declare that I do solemnly swear it to be my most firm and sincere opinion, belief, and persuasion, That neither the Pope, nor any General Council, nor any Priest, nor any Ecclesiastical Power whatsoever, can absolve the subjects of this realm, or any of them, from their allegiance to his said Majesty; and that no foreign Prince, Person, Prelate, State, or Potentate hath or ought to have any civil or temporal jurisdiction whatsoever within this realm, and I will resist to the utmost of my power every invasion of, hostility against, and interference with the independence, sovereignty, laws or constitution of this kingdom, or with the civil or ecclesiastical government of this kingdom as by law established, by or on the part of the said pretended direct or indirect temporal or civil power of any aforesaid foreign Prince, Person, Prelate, State or Potentate, even though the said invasion, hostility or interference should be made under the pretence or on account of establishing the Roman Catholic religion.

And I do protest and declare and most solemnly swear it to be my most firm and sincere belief that no person who is come to the use of reason, can be absolved from any sin, nor any sin whatever, that is committed after a person has come to the use of reason, can be remitted at the mere pleasure or will of any Pope or of any Priest, or of any person whomsoever, but that sincere sorrow and a firm purpose of amendment, and of making every possible reparation to the injured neighbour, are indispensable requisites to establish a well-founded expectation of forgiveness;—and that no breach of faith with, or injury to, or hostility against any person whomsoever can ever be justified by reason or under pretence that such person is a heretic, a schismatic, rebel or enemy to the Church, or because he is of a dif-

ferent religion from myself; and that neither the Pope nor any Prelate nor any Priest nor any assembly of Prelates or Priests nor any ecclesiastical power whatever can at any time dispense with or absolve me from the obligations of this Oath, or of any other civil oath, compact or promise whatever, to the injury or detriment of the rights of a third person, and I do also in my conscience declare and solemnly swear that the infallibility of the Pope is no article of my faith, and that I would not believe him or obey him, although he should dispense with or annul this my solemn Oath of allegiance, abjuration and declaration or any part of it, or should declare it to have been null and void from the beginning; and all these things I do plainly and sincerely declare, acknowledge and swear according to these express words by me spoken, and according to the plain and ordinary sense of the same words, without any equivocation, mental evasion, or secret reservation whatsoever; and I do make the aforesaid protestation, declaration, recognition, acknowledgment, abjuration, renunciation, promise, and oath, heartily, willingly and truly, upon the true faith of a christian.

So help me God.

WILLIAM GIBSON.
And by Proxy for CHARLES WALMESLEY
JOHN DOUGLASS.

OATH OF THE ACT OF 1791, AS FINALLY ENACTED, BEING THE IRISH OATH OF 1774, WITH A FEW SLIGHT CHANGES.

I, A. B., do hereby declare, that I do profess the Roman Catholic Religion.

I, A. B., do sincerely promise and swear, That I will be faithful and bear true Allegiance to His Majesty King *George* the Third, and Him will defend to the utmost of my Power against all Conspiracies and Attempts whatever that shall be made against His Person, Crown, or Dignity; and I will do my utmost Endeavour to disclose and make known to His Majesty, His Heirs and Successors, all Treasons and traitorous Conspiracies which may be formed against Him or them; And I do faithfully promise to maintain, support, and defend, to the utmost of my Power, the Succession of the Crown; which Succession, by an Act, intituled, *An Act for the further Limitation of the Crown, and better securing the Rights and Liberties of the Subject*, is and stands limited to the Princess *Sophia* Electress and Duchess Dowager of *Hanover*, and the Heirs of her Body, being Protestants; hereby utterly renouncing and abjuring any Obedience or Allegiance unto any other Person claiming or pretending a Right to the Crown of these Realms: And I do swear, that I do reject and detest, as an

unchristian and impious Position, that it is lawful to murder or destroy any Person or Persons whatsoever, for or under Pretence of their being Hereticks or Infidels; and also that unchristian and impious Principle, that Faith is not to be kept with Hereticks or Infidels: And I further declare, that it is not an Article of my Faith, and that I do renounce, reject, and abjure the Opinion, that Princes excommunicated by the Pope and Council, or any Authority of the See of *Rome*, or by any Authority whatsoever, may be deposed or murdered by their subjects, or any Person whatsoever: And I do promise, that I will not hold, maintain, or abet any such Opinion, or any other Opinions contrary to what is expressed in this Declaration: And I do declare, that I do not believe, that the Pope of *Rome*, or any other Foreign Prince, Prelate, State, or Potentate, hath or ought to have, any Temporal or Civil Jurisdiction, Power, Superiority, or Pre-eminence, directly or indirectly, within this Realm: And I do solemnly, in the Presence of God, profess, testify and declare, that I do make this Declaration, and every Part thereof, in the plain and ordinary Sense of the Words of this Oath, without any Evasion, Equivocation, or mental Reservation whatever; and without any Dispensation already granted by the Pope, or any Authority of the See of *Rome*, or any Person whatever; and without thinking that I am or can be acquitted before God or Man, or absolved of this Declaration, or any part thereof, although the Pope or any other Person or Authority whatsoever shall dispense with or annul the same, or declare that it was null or void. So help me GOD.

APPENDIX F.

"PETITION OF THE LADIES, WIDOWS, &C." PRINTED IN 1790.

(See vol. i., p. 229.)

To the Right Reverend, Reverend, Right Honourable and Worshipful Committee appointed to guard and promote the interests of the British Roman Catholics:

The humble Petition of the Ladies, Widows, Wives and Spinsters, Housekeepers, Cooks, Housemaids and other Female Persons professing the Roman Catholic Religion

Humbly sheweth;

That your petitioners, conceiving themselves to be sorely aggrieved by the subtraction of their unalienable rights, think proper to solicit relief from your justice and generosity, before they exert in their own defence those powers which Providence has placed in their hands.

Though born in a free country, and under the protection of laws peculiarly favourable to their sex, they have hitherto only enjoyed the use of that authority in the paltry concerns of domestic management, which their husbands and masters have abandoned to them, from a consciousness of their own inability to manage such concerns.

Notwithstanding continual proofs of their mental abilities, they have not hitherto been consulted in any of the great measures which your wisdom has proposed for the temporal and spiritual advantage of the Catholic body. Even the remembrance of their justest rights was almost effaced, when a gentleman of rank, animated with the liberal spirit of the age, lately informed them that the old mode of appointing their spiritual directors was grounded in abuse, and that the nomination of those Gentlemen belongs, by right, to the whole flock over which they preside.

Your petitioners who constitute one half of that flock and have given birth to the whole, trust in your liberal principles and generosity that you will redress their wrongs, and assert their undoubted right to vote in the approaching election of Bishops, in which they are equally interested with the male part of the Community. It would be an evident injustice to exclude one half of the flock from a right which is now demonstrated to belong to the whole; and besides this glar-

ing contradiction, your discernment will discover particular reasons which favour the just claim of your petitioners.

It is allowed that they attend to their spiritual improvement, to meditations and ascetic reading, more than their husbands and brothers, and as they have more frequent need of the advice of their spiritual directors, they think it unfair that the choice of them should rest exclusively in those who so seldom use or want their ministry.

It is known to all mistresses of families, housekeepers and cooks that the troublesome authority of Bishops, especially in the Lenten season, pervades even the store room, pantry and kitchen which are so directly in their department, and they conceive that when Bishops shall be chosen dependently on their sex, their Lordships will assume more liberal and condescending principles in this behalf, to the great comfort of families and advantage of domestic economy.

Though many of your petitioners have sacrificed their wedding gowns and most costly attire to the service of the altar, they have hitherto been confined to the humble duty of washing and darning ragged surplices, and are excluded from every duty of the sanctuary except that of sweeping it.

This disdainful usage will appear the more unjustifiable when it is remembered that one of the brightest lights of the clergy has pronounced your petitioners to be unrivalled in virtues, and even qualified for the discharge of all missionary duties, a commendation never yet bestowed upon the Gentlemen, nor even coveted by them.

If your petitioners' talents could be doubted, they might allege the distinguished part which their sex has borne in effecting the late civil and religious revolutions in the kingdom of France, and they confide that their concurrence will be equally effectual towards perfecting the projected reformation of abuses in the government of the British Catholic Church.

They are the more confident of this, as they expect to be soon reinforced by a number of their religious aunts and sisters whom the liberality of the age will release from conventual confinement in foreign countries, who from their acquaintance with ecclesiastical affairs, will enter on this mission with the spirit of apostles, and will deem it a peculiar hardship to be denied the liberty of voting for their directors in the mission, after having so long enjoyed that of governing them in the convent.

Your petitioners trust that when they shall be restored to their ancient right of appointing Bishops, they may without offence elect deaconesses from among themselves, and present them to the nearest Bishop for ordination, it being notorious that deaconesses were the glory of the ancient church, and that the extinction of that order is

a grievous hardship of the sex, and a most lamentable abuse of modern ecclesiastical discipline.

Upon these and other motives they confide that the reasons which have demonstrated the dependence of Bishops and priests in the discharge of their spiritual functions upon lay persons of your sex will be found to militate equally in favour of your petitioners. "And they trust that you will not permit human motives, the fear of thwarting the prejudices of individuals, nor an indolent acquiescence in prevalent abuses to prevent your compliance with so indispensable a part of your duty as is that of preserving the right of one half of the Catholic Body free and untainted."

And your petitioners, as in duty bound, shall ever pray, &c.

APPENDIX G.

"RECLAMATION" OF REV. JOSEPH WILKES DELIVERED TO BISHOP WALMESLEY IN 1791.

(See vol. i., p. 330.)

MY LORD CHARLES BISHOP OF RAMA, VICAR APOSTOLIC OF THE WESTERN DISTRICT OF ENGLAND.

I, Joseph Wilkes, a priest within the Western District of England, a Monk of the Holy Order of St. Benedict and one of the Clergy and Laity appointed under an unanimous resolution of the General Meeting of the English Catholics on the third of May, one thousand seven hundred and eighty-seven (convened after a public and printed notice universally circulated) to be a Committee to watch over and promote the public interests of the English Catholics:

Having received from your Lordship the following notification in writing,

REVD. MR. JOSEPH WILKES.

As in your printed letter of the 28th of September last to Thos. Clifford Esq. you maintain principles which I disapprove, therefore I declare your missionary faculties to cease with the twelfth day of this next November in my District.

CHARLES WALMESLEY, *Vicar Apostolic.*

I, the aforesaid Joseph Wilkes, do therefore humbly beg leave to present myself before your Lordship. I profess myself a member of the One, Holy, Catholic, Apostolic and Roman Church, and an affectionate and dutiful child of the successor of St. Peter, the Vicar of Christ upon Earth, and I unfeignedly and unequivocally acknowledge the duty of obedience which I owe according to the Holy Canons to your Lordship as Vicar Apostolic of the District to which I belong. I beg leave also to express the concern it gives me to have incurred your Lordship's displeasure, and to assure you that in consequence of your order of the twenty-ninth of October, I have since the twelfth of November refrained from the exercise of missionary faculties, have not sought to impede or protract the execution of that order, even

by the benefit of appeal, and shall continue to refrain from the exercise of missionary faculties in your Lordship's District unless regularly empowered to exercise them again. But considering that the above order and revocation of missionary faculties must necessarily prejudice my character and render my innocence suspected, I therefore confide in your Lordship's benignity and condescension that you will excuse and allow my having recourse to this, the only regular means now in my power, for my justification. Conscious of the rectitude of my intentions, and humbly hoping that in no act of my life I have deviated from the obedience which I owe to the Church, to the Most Holy See, and to the Apostolical Vicars, in whose Districts I have been employed, or to the Superiors of the Order of which I am a member, or have given any cause of scandal or offence by any immorality, contempt of the Gospel, transgression of the laws of my country, Infidelity in discharging my public trust, or neglect of parochial duties :

I humbly beg leave therefore to protest against your Lordship's aforesaid notification of revocation of missionary faculties, as unjust and informal, prejudicial to my character and innocence, likely by its effects to convulse the very respectable congregation of which I have for five years been the pastor, tending to dishonour the members of the Catholic Committee, and that large and illustrious majority of English Catholics who have uniformly adhered to them, and approved of their conduct, to revive and inflame dissensions and animosities among the Catholics of England, to scandalise our Protestant neighbours and fellow subjects, to bring imputations on the principles and practice of the Catholic Church, to render the government of this mission by Apostolic Vicars suspected and odious to the nation, and particularly as expressing disapprobation of an essential principle supported by the practice of every civil Government, and especially by the practice and Ecclesiastical Canons of the Catholic Church in all nations, and in all countries.

And I would now send my Reclamation and Appeal to the competent Judge. But fear of the misconception to which such a measure is liable, fear of the offence it may give to Government and the nation, and fear of evils which by this means may be occasioned to our Holy Religion, to your Lordship and to myself, deter me from the measure for the present.

THEREFORE

I, the said Joseph Wilkes, by way of conformity or analogy to the mode prescribed by the received practice of the Church (Dec. Greg. Lib. 2, de Appell. Tit. 28, c. 73—Durandi, Speculum Juris Lib. 4, Part. 2), do now solemnly PROTEST to your Lordship, and

in your Lordship's presence against your Lordship's notification of revocation of faculties hereinbefore mentioned, as INFORMAL, no monitions having preceded either directly from your Lordship, or through the channel of my Religious Superiors; and the charges against me not having been sufficiently specified; and as materially UNJUST, the charges—if I understand them right—not amounting to a Canonical fault, and the only clause in my letter to Thomas Clifford Esq. which in the least looks like a principle maintained (namely the right of protesting against and appealing from measures and decisions conscientiously believed to be erroneous and aggrieving) appearing to my serious reflections so far from deserving disapprobation, that it is a principle essentially necessary to the support of civil or ecclesiastical government; and that without it there can be no establishment of church discipline or Supremacy in the Apostolic See.

And I do hereby solemnly claim in defence of my character and innocence, all the rights of an actual reclamation and appeal made before the Competent Judge as in such cases are allowed.

JOSEPH WILKES.

BATH, 21*st Novr.* 1791.

Witnesses:

HENRY DILLON	DAVID NAGLE.
PHILIP HOWARD	PIERCE WALSH.
HENRY FERMOR	THOS. CANNING.

APPENDIX H.

EXTRACT FROM THE PROCEEDINGS OF THE BOARD OF ADMINISTRATION OF THE DISTRICT OF DOUAY.[1]

It having been represented to several members of this Board that among the different establishments founded by the subjects of Great Britain in this District there are some Individuals who lend too favourable an attention to the enemies of the constitution and who may be led away by the insidious arts of evil minded men; the Administrators of the District of Douay, full of admiration for the great character of the people of Great Britain, have thought proper to desire the five houses of English, Scotch, and Irish of this town, to chuse two persons from each to appear before the said Administrators at four o'clock in the afternoon of the 15th of this month.[2]

The deputies of the five British houses having appeared at the hour appointed, the President addressed the following discourse to them.

"Gentlemen,

"If a nation which receives you is entitled to your acknowledgement, it must be the height of ingratitude to turn the Houses you enjoy under the protection of the Laws of a free people into a den of Counter-revolutionists.

"Never forget that the ancestors of those who in Great Britain profess the same religion with us, became obnoxious to the Government only by blending the cause of Religion with that of civil establishment. Rome would have wept over this fatal mistake, if Rome were sensible of the misfortunes of Religion.

"You are Missionaries, and you are employed in forming Missionaries; but in all this we are totally unconcerned.

"Your Mission is in Great Britain, and we enquire not into your success; but it is our duty to watch over your conduct while you live amongst us.

"May that conduct be always such that we may have no reason to

[1] Printed as a pamphlet in 1793: see vol. ii., p. 73.
[2] December, 1791.

prefer our complaints to that Assembly which has generously granted you its protection and all the rights of hospitality. To violate those rights ever was and ever will be a shocking crime.

"The English Nation bears a great character, and we are convinced that every Englishman who has not forfeited his honour by some crime will start with horror at the bare mention of such a misconduct.

"You live in the midst of a people from whom no power on earth shall wrest the blessing of liberty which we have acquired. Live peaceably, live quietly among us. On this condition we are your brethren.

"You belong to a great nation whose feudal system has often interfered with ours. The private quarrels of kings and the political speculations of ministers, disguised under the specious pretext of commerce, have never ceased to arm the subjects of both kingdoms. But the English and the French mutually esteem each other. It is certainly not written in the book of fate that they shall never cease to be enemies. Your form of government would probably have been adopted by us if our representatives had not conceived that it was possible to form a better.

"That form which we have received from them, Gentlemen, is dear to us. It is our duty to enforce the constitutional laws and it is yours to respect them."

On the 17th a printed copy of this address was presented to each Deputy, and was published. On the 23rd the same Deputies asked and obtained an audience, which was fixed for the 24th at noon. They appeared at the time appointed and the following answer was given by Mr. Dillon, D.D., and President of the Irish College.

"GENTLEMEN,

"We can never forget our obligations to a generous nation which received us with tenderness at a time when we were driven from home by a spirit of intolerance and persecution. We are sensible of what has been done for us at a time when the violent agitation attendant on a revolution seemed to prevent your attention to our particular establishments; we remember with gratitude what we owe to the Gentleman who has the honour to preside at this Board, who was pleased to favour us with his protection in the different Committees of the constituent Assembly of which he was a member. It is our duty to proclaim, and we do it with great satisfaction, that to him we chiefly are indebted for the Decrees issued in our favour. Can we possibly be suspected of ingratitude after so many favours received? Can you, Gentlemen, in particular, think we can be guilty of so black a crime? An anonymous information, unsupported by proof, has brought us before you and subjected us to your displeasure and your

threats. Had we reason to expect so severe a trial? Could you so easily persuade yourselves that Houses inhabited by men formed by religion to the duties of submission, charity and obedience, could suddenly become dens—yea, dens of Counter-revolutionists?

"We are not unknown to you, and the whole town is a witness of our conduct. We have never left our Houses but to succour the distressed, whom we consider as our Fellow citizens and our Brethren. Presumption was in our favour.

"Permit us, Gentlemen, to express to you our real concern. The breath of suspicion on your part wounds our feelings. You attack us in a tender part. You are pleased to call to our remembrance names ever dear to us; you stile them the ancestors of those who profess the Roman Catholic Religion in England; can you forget that they are our ancestors? Why chuse to calumniate them before their children? Our answer shall be such as a filial piety suggests. No, Gentlemen, our ancestors never rendered themselves obnoxious to civil government; but they were the victims of persecution. They never confounded the temporal with the ecclesiastical jurisdiction. This was the crime of their unfortunate Prince the author of the schism, who dared to claim a double power which he had not received from heaven.

"Rome on that occasion adopted vigourous measures, which the event has not justified. But Rome will ever be considered by us as the centre of Catholic unity, the Mother Church to which the blessed Founder of our Religion has granted a primacy of jurisdiction over all the churches of the universe. No, Rome never beheld the misfortunes of religion with indifference. Not content to weep over them, she has endeavoured to repair them. But for Rome few Catholics would now be found in our country, and we should incur the guilt of ingratitude if we did not take this opportunity to declare that we have great obligations to Rome as well as to France.

"You tell us that you enquire not into the success of our mission and we will not observe to you that France, after doing so much for us has a right to enquire whether on our return to England our Apostolical labour answer their benevolent designs; but we will take the liberty to express our astonishment at what you are pleased to add, that you think it your duty to watch over our conduct as long as we live among you. To watch over the conduct of all the individuals residing in a kingdom is the duty of the magistrates; but when magistrates declare in a public meeting and publish from the press that they will watch over the conduct of one or more individuals, do they not declare them to be suspected persons; do they not pronounce a penalty against them; and can they do this without a previous trial? A man publicly declared to be suspected is much in the same predicament with a person arraigned, but dismissed from a court

of judicature without being acquitted, and what man of honour would not shudder at such a situation!

"Was it necessary to add to this threat that if any faults should be found with us, we should be denounced to that Assembly which has so generously protected us? Was it necessary to lay before us the enormity of the crime of ingratitude? Was it necessary to put us in mind of the great character of our nation? Yes, Gentlemen, we have the honour to be Englishmen; and as such we execrate so foul a crime, and we indignantly resist the smallest suspicion of our guilt.

"Cease then to advise us to live peaceably and quietly among you. What can we wish beyond peace and tranquillity? If on this condition we are to be your brethren, we have ever been, we will continue to be such.

"We will not enter into a detail of the causes which have so often armed Great Britain and France. The enquiry is above our strength, but we will offer up our daily prayers that a lasting peace may subsist between your country and ours. We do not only respect the French nation, but we love them from inclination and gratitude.

"Nor shall we make any comparison between your government and ours; we will only say that we naturally prefer our own; but we will be inviolably faithful and submissive to the laws of the French Government as long as we continue to live under its protection; and it shall never be said with truth that we have disturbed the order and peace of a hospitable nation, which has opened its arms to us with a goodness which adorns its character and distinguishes it from other nations.

"These, Gentlemen, are our real sentiments; they are such as you must approve; such as must banish all suspicion; such in short as you may safely and victoriously oppose to the dark unfounded informations of dangerous men who are always ready to discover crimes in others, while they themselves are ashamed of being known.

"GENTLEMEN,

"All France, and perhaps the whole British Empire will soon know that we have been denounced to you and that you have not despised our accusers. You have published your discourse. We presume to request that our answer be also communicated to the public. We think we owe this to ourselves, to honour, to truth, to France, of which it shall not be said that in heaping her favours on us she has only been repaid by ingratitude; in short, we owe it to our country, whose high character has excited your admiration, and which we are bound to support.

"We are, with respect,

"Gentlemen,

"Your most humble &c."

When this harangue was finished, the deputies were asked by the President, if it was their desire that it should be transmitted to the National Assembly. Their answer was that they had nothing in view but to justify themselves in the eyes of the public. A few days were allowed them to prepare a decisive answer; at the end of which they addressed the following letter to the President and the Administrators of the District.

"DOUAY, *December* 30, 1791.

"GENTLEMEN,

"When we had the honour to give in our answer to your Board, it was far from our intention to give you the least offence, and still farther to engage in a contest which was to be submitted to the determination of the Legislature. Conscious of our innocence, ambitious to obtain your approbation, faithful to the duties of honour, we were desirous only to justify ourselves to you, to the public and to our country. The accusation of ingratitude, the affront offered to the memory of our ancestors, your suspicions, your precautions, your threats which represented us as suspected persons; all these hurt our feelings and made us really unhappy. We should not have mentioned Rome had we not been provoked to it; but the French love liberty, and the most Christian king will not blame us for expressing our respect, our gratitude to the Holy See, at a time when the Parliament of England, after two centuries of prejudices, has lately declared that our belief in this respect should no longer cause suspicion, and is not incompatible with the duties of a citizen. We are deeply concerned at the reports which have been maliciously spread abroad, especially since the audience we had the honour to obtain of you. Be pleased to disabuse the public, or to suffer us to do it. If in our answer anything should be found which, contrary to our intention, may appear too strong for the liberty of this country, or to exceed the bounds of a just and lawful defence let the blame fall not on our establishments, but on ourselves, and let us personally answer for it. To conclude, Gentlemen, we adhere steadily and sincerely to the sentiments contained in our declaration: we cannot disavow them without injuring our honour and conscience. We resign into your hands and commit to your discretion the writing we left on your table that you may make any use of it which your prudence shall suggest in the present circumstances.

"We are with respect

"Gentlemen

"Your most Humble &c."

APPENDIX K.

CASE OF THE SUFFERING CLERGY OF FRANCE, REFUGEES IN THE BRITISH DOMINIONS.[1]

It is well known that a cruel and inhuman persecution is now, and hath for some time past been carried on by a faction of atheists, infidels, and other persons of evil principles and dispositions, calling themselves philosophers, against our bretheren, the christians of France.

In this persecution, a vast multitude of persons of all ages, sexes, and conditions, and particularly the Clergy, have suffered in a grievous manner. Many of them have been, with circumstances of great barbarity and outrage put to death, and their bodies, according to the customs lately prevalent in France, treated with savage indignities.

Several women of whom some were of rank, dedicated to religion, in the peculiar exercise of a sublime charity, by an attendance upon the sick in hospitals, have been stripped naked, and in public barbarously scourged. Thousands of other respectable religious women, mostly engaged in the education of persons of their own sex, and other laudable occupations, have been deprived of their estates, and expelled from their house, in which they had purchased a property by the portions given to them by their parents. These respectable women, are many of them, far advanced in years, and labouring under great infirmities; the major part are at or near the declining period of life, and all are utterly inconversant in the affairs of the world, and in the means of procuring themselves any subsistance. They by whose charity they scantly subsisted, under every species of insult, vexation and oppression, before their expulsion from their houses by the cruelty of the philosophic faction, are now, for the most part, themselves obliged to fly their country, or are reduced to an almost equal degree of penury with those they had been accustomed to relieve.

Many thousands of the parochial clergy, after having been driven from their livings and houses, and robbed of their legal property, have been deprived of the wretched pensions which had been by public faith stipulated to be paid to them when that robbery and expulsion

[1] See vol. ii., p. 20.

were ordered; and have been exposed to perish by famine. Others in very great numbers, have been arbitrarily thrown into unwholesome and incommodious prisons, and kept there for a long time without any redress, against all law, and against the direct orders of the supreme magistrate of their new constitution, whose duty it was to see that no illegal punishment should be executed.

At length after a tedious imprisonment (suffered with a mildness, a patience, and a constancy, which have not been denied by their very persecutors, whose rage and malice, however, these examples of Christian virtue have failed in the least degree to mitigate) the municipal bodies, or the factious clubs who appoint and guide them, have by their proper authority transported into a foreign kingdom a considerable number of the said prisoners in slave ships.

At the same time, all the rest of the Clergy, who by lying hid, or flying from place to place, have hitherto escaped confinement; and endeavoured in private to worship God according to their consciences and the ancient fundamental laws of their country, are hunted out like wild beasts, and by the power aforesaid, have been ordered, in terms the most insulting and atrocious ever used in any public assembly, to quit the kingdom within fifteen days, without the least preparation and provision, or, together with those imprisoned and not yet exiled, to be instantly transported to the most wild, uncultivated, and pestiferous part of the whole globe; that is to Guiana in South America.

All this [has been] done without calling upon one single person, of the many thousands subject to this severe and iniquitous sentence, as well as to all the cruel preceding oppressions, to answer to any specified offence or charge whatsoever.

Several of the said clergy (some of whom are aged and infirm persons) to avoid imprisonment and the other various vexations above mentioned, and in many cases, to prevent the commission of further crimes in the destruction of their respective flocks for their attachment to their pastors, have been obliged to fly their country, and to take refuge in the British dominions, where their general exemplary behaviour has greatly added to the compassion excited by their unmerited sufferings.

They have hitherto received charitable assistance from the voluntary bounty of some worthy individuals; but this resource becoming daily more and more inadequate to the increasing number and wants of those whose sufferings claim relief, it has been proposed to open a general subscription in their favour; especially as at the present moment, the effect of the late horrid decree must be expected to render such a measure more than ever necessary.

It is confidently hoped, that a difference in religious persuasion

will not shut the hearts of the English Public against their suffering Brethren, the Christians of France; but that all true Sons of the Church of England, all true subjects of our Saviour Jesus Christ, who are not ashamed in this time of apostasy or prevarication, to confess their obedience to and imitation of their divine Master in their Charity to their suffering Brethren of all denominations—it is hoped that all persons who from the inbred sentiments of a generous nature cultivate the virtues of humanity—it is hoped, that all persons attached to the cause of religious and civil Liberty, as it is connected with Law and Order—it is hoped that all these will be gratified in having an opportunity of contributing to the support of these worthy Sufferers in the cause of Honour, Virtue, Loyalty and Religion.

They who propose this subscription are very much encouraged in their hopes from the public munificence, in recollecting that on a former distinguished occasion, our national charity was not confined to our own country, but that a large sum of money was sent from England to the sufferers in the earthquake at Lisbon—though Portugal is itself an opulent and powerful nation, in a great degree sufficient to all its own necessities.

There is another case of a still stronger and nearer example. During the war which ended in 1763, the charity and humanity of the English nation distinguished itself by a liberal subscription for the French prisoners; though France was then in open war with great Britain, and most of these prisoners were taken in various acts of hostility against this nation. We forgot the hostility of the enemy, and only thought of the calamity of the prisoner.

We trust that such of our Countrymen as were then alive, are still mindful of their former virtue; and that the generation which has succeeded, is emulous of the good actions of their forefathers.

The Gentlemen for whom this subscription is proposed, have never been guilty of any ill design against us. They have fled for refuge to this sanctuary. They are here under the sacred protection of hospitality—Englishmen who cherish the virtue of hospitality, and who do not wish an hard and scanty construction of its laws, will not think it enough that such Guests are in safety from the violence of their own countrymen, while they perish from our neglect.

These respectable sufferers are much greater objects of compassion than soldiers and mariners, men professionally formed to hardships and the vicissitudes of life—Our sufferers are men of peaceful, studious, and uniform habits; in a course of life entered into upon prospects and provisions held out by the laws, and by all men reputed certain. Perhaps of all persons in the world, they had the least reason to look for imprisonment, exile and famine. Englishmen will not

argue crime from misfortune. They will have an awful feeling of the uncertain nature of all human prosperity. Those men had their establishments too: they were protected by laws; they were endowed with revenues. They had houses; they had estates. And it is but the other day that these very persons distributed alms in their own country, for whom in their extreme necessities, alms are now requested in a foreign land.

N.B. A Committee will shortly be appointed to the management of this business so far as the collection is concerned. But it is proposed that the worthy prelate the Bishop of St. Pol de Leon be requested to take upon him the distribution of the money that may be collected, as the Sufferers are all addressed to him; as he has hitherto distributed the private succours; and is a better judge than any of us can be of the necessities of the persons, and the proportions of the relief to be administered.

Since the drawing up of this Case, many hundred of the Clergy have been massacred at Paris, with the venerable Archbishop of Arles, a prelate the greatest ornament of the Gallican Church in virtue and knowledge; and four other eminent and worthy bishops, at their head. Some bishops and a considerable number of the clergy are arrived, and are daily and almost hourly arriving, since that horrible slaughter.

*** The following BANKERS are so good as to receive SUBSCRIPTIONS, and to retain them, till a MEETING has been held, and a COMMITTEE formed, for disposing of the sums that may be collected, viz.

Messrs. Gosling, Fleet Street.
Messrs. Hankey and Co., Fenchurch Street.
Messrs. Ransom, Moreland, Hammersley and Co., Pall-Mall.
Messrs. Wright and Co., Henrietta Street, Covent Garden.

CHRONOLOGICAL TABLE OF THE EVENTS RECORDED IN THE FOREGOING PAGES.

1781, January 12. On the death of Bishop Challoner, Bishop James Talbot succeeds as Vicar Apostolic of the London District.

1782, June 3. Formation of Catholic Committee (all laymen) for five years.

June. Memorials of the Catholic Committee to Lord Rockingham and Lord Shelburne.

1783, May. The Committee write to each of the Vicars Apostolic advocating the establishment of a regular Hierarchy in England. The latter answer in different senses.

December. Pitt becomes Prime Minister.

1785, December 15. Secret marriage of the Prince of Wales and Mrs. Fitzherbert at the house of the latter in Park Lane.

1786, August 1. Charles Berington consecrated Bishop as Coadjutor to Dr. Thomas Talbot (Midland District).

1787, April 10. Publication of the Committee's "Address to the English Catholics".

May 3. Re-election of the Committee for a further term of five years.

Autumn. Manifesto of Northern Catholics against the new school proposed by the Committee.

1788, February 21. Memorial of the Catholic Committee sent to Pitt.

April 19. Charles Butler commissioned by the Committee to draft a Bill for Catholic Relief.

May 9. Deputation of the Committee to Pitt, who promises a Catholic Relief Bill, but recommends waiting to the following year. By his desire questions are sent to six foreign Catholic Universities about tenets popularly ascribed to Catholics. The six Universities answer unanimously repudiating the tenets.

May 15. The names of three priests—Bishops James Talbot and Charles Berington, and Rev. Joseph Wilkes, O.S.B.—added to the Committee.

1788, July 31. Appeal for subscriptions for rebuilding Warwick Street Chapel.

October 12. "Illness" of the King declared.

November. The Protestation delivered to Lord Petre by the Earl of Stanhope.

1789, March. Recovery of the King.

March 21. Addresses of Congratulation to the King and Queen voted at a general meeting of Catholics, and signed by Lord Petre on their behalf.

February-April. The Protestation signed by priests and laymen.

May 8. Mr. Beaufoy's motion in favour of Dissenters rejected by the House of Commons by a narrow majority.

May 18. Lord Stanhope's Bill in favour of non-conforming members of the Church of England rejected by the House of Lords.

June 25. Mr. Mitford gives notice of the proposed Catholic Relief Bill, which had been again postponed, in consequence of the King's malady.

June 26. The New Oath, based on the Protestation, published in *Woodfall's Register*.

October 19-21. Meeting of Vicars Apostolic at Hammersmith. First condemnation of the New Oath.

November 25. Issue of the Committee's Letters to the Catholics of England and the Vicars Apostolic respectively. They are printed in the *First Blue Book*.

1790, January 1. Manifesto of Lancashire Clergy.

January 25. Manifesto of Staffordshire Clergy.

January 26. Death of Bishop James Talbot.

February 2. Meeting of some of the London Clergy: "Persuasive Resolution" agreed to.

February 3. "Open Committee Meeting:" the Oath slightly modified.

February 18. Meeting of London Clergy to select names to be recommended to Rome for new Vicar Apostolic.

March 2. Fox's motion for repeal of Test and Corporation Acts defeated by large majority. The Catholic Relief Bill again postponed till the following year.

March 12. Opening of new Chapel at Warwick Street.

March 21. Opening of Chapel at St. George's Fields.

April. Rev. Robert Smelt arrives in Rome as agent to the English Bishops, to succeed Mgr. Stonor, who retires through old age.

May 19. Death of Bishop Matthew Gibson.

1790, June 12. Dissolution of Parliament.

July 19. Election of Rev. William Gibson as Vicar Apostolic of the Northern District.

August 15. Consecration of Dr. Carroll as Bishop of Baltimore at Lulworth.

September 15. Rev. John Douglass elected Vicar Apostolic of the London District.

November 26. New Parliament meets: Pitt continues in power.

December 5. Dr. William Gibson consecrated at Lulworth by Bishop Walmesley. Sermon by Rev. John Milner.

December 19. Dr. Douglass consecrated at Lulworth by Bishop William Gibson. Sermon by Rev. Charles Plowden.

1791, January 19. Publication of the Encyclical of three Bishops, with second condemnation of the Oath. Bishop Thomas Talbot dissents.

February 2. The Committee's letter to Bishop Douglass signed.

February 8. Meeting between the Committee and Bishops Gibson and Douglass. The Bishops call upon the Committee to desist; the latter give notice that they will appeal to Rome.

February 17. The Committee's "Protest and Appeal" signed. It is printed, together with their letter to Bishop Douglass, in the *Second Blue Book*.

February 21. Formal notice of the Bill for the relief of "Protesting Catholic Dissenters" given in the House of Commons by Mr. Mitford. It is referred to a Committee of the whole House.

February 26. Rev. Joseph Wilkes, O.S.B., suspended by Bishop Walmesley.

March 1. Relief Bill considered in Parliament. Milner distributes his first handbill. Leave given for the introduction of the Bill.

March 3. The Bishop of St. Pol de Léon lands in Mount's Bay, Cornwall.

March 8. Milner distributes his second handbill in the House of Commons.

March 19. Meeting against Milner at Norfolk House.

March 10. Relief Bill read the first time in the House of Commons.

March 17. Reopening of Chapel at St. George's Fields.

March 21. Relief Bill read the second time in the House of Commons. Milner retires to Winchester.

1791, April 1. Catholic Relief Bill in Committee.
April 8. Catholic Relief Bill reported to the House.
April 20. Catholic Relief Bill read the third time in House of Commons.
May 3. Catholic Relief Bill in the House of Lords—first reading.
May 31. Catholic Relief Bill in the House of Lords—second reading. Speech by Dr Horsley.
June 3. Catholic Relief Bill in the House of Lords—Committee stage. The Oath finally amended.
June 7. Catholic Relief Bill in the House of Lords—third reading.
June 9. General meeting of Catholics at the Crown and Anchor. Protestation voted to be deposited in the British Museum.
June 10. Catholic Relief Bill receives Royal assent.
June 24. Catholic Relief Bill comes into operation.
September 10. Rev. Joseph Wilkes submits and his faculties are restored to him.
September 28. Letter of Rev. Joseph Wilkes to Mr. Thomas Clifford explaining away his submission.
November 12. Second suspension of Rev. Joseph Wilkes.
November 21. The six laymen of Bath congregation take up the case of Rev. Joseph Wilkes. They are excommunicated by Bishop Walmesley, and appeal to Rome.
December 8. Opening of Spanish Place Chapel. Sermon by Rev. Thomas Hussey.
Mission established at Portsmouth.
New chapel built at Shefford (Beds).
New chapel built by Mrs. Heneage at Newport (Isle of Wight).

1792, April 12. Foundation of the "Cisalpine Club".
April 21. Letter of the Committee to the Catholics of England; it is printed in the *Third Blue Book*.
April 28. First meeting of the "Gentlemen Mediators".
May 3. General meeting of English Catholics, Mr. Webbe Weston, one of the Mediators, in the chair. The Committee dissolve by the expiration of their term of office, and they are not re-elected.
May. Rev. Joseph Wilkes goes abroad.
June 27. End of the Mediation. Account of the proceedings printed in the *Buff Book*.
August 25. Meeting of Vicars Apostolic to consider the

recent publications by Rev. Joseph Berington, Sir John Throckmorton and others.

1792, September. Arrival of French refugee priests in large numbers.

September 20. Committee formed by the Marquis of Buckingham and Mr. John Wilmot, for the relief of the French Clergy. Pitt a member of the Committee. Appeal written by Edmund Burke. Subscriptions throughout the country.

September 29. Opening of new Chapel in Sutton Street, Soho. Sermon by Rev. Arthur O'Leary.

October. French Trappists settled at Lulworth.

October 17. Benedictine nuns from Montargis (now at Princethorpe) land at Brighton.

November 4. The King's House at Winchester opened for the reception of the French Refugee Clergy.

December 5. Milner's new Chapel at Winchester consecrated by Bishop Douglass, and opened the following day.

December 9. New Chapel opened at Old Hall Green.

December 26. Joint Pastoral of three of the four Vicars Apostolic against certain recent publications. Bishop Thomas Talbot again dissents.

1793, January 21. The King of France beheaded.

January 29. Requiem for Louis XVI. at the Spanish Chapel. Sermon by Rev. Thomas Hussey.

February 1. War declared between England and France.

February 21. Address of English Catholics to King George III. signed.

April 17. The King's letter on behalf of the French Refugee Clergy issued. It is promulgated by the Archbishops of Canterbury and York. Collections are made in all Anglican churches.

August 1. The Collegians at St. Omer imprisoned.

August 4. Bishop Walmesley, at the recommendation of Propaganda, removes the excommunication from the Bath laymen.

October 12. Fall of Douay College: the students and professors sent to prison at Doullens. Some escape on the road, or later. Six English Benedictines from Douay imprisoned with them.

October. Other British houses in France confiscated, and the priests or religious sent to prison.

November 12. Mgr. Erskine, Papal Envoy, arrives in London.

1793, November 16. The first Church students from Douay having been conducted to Old Hall by Bishop Douglass a few days before, dedicate their new work to St. Edmund on his feast-day.

November. New Chapel opened at Greenwich.

December. Rev. John Bew goes to Oscott to receive students for the Church, the first of whom arrives the following February.

1794. Rev. Joseph Wilkes, on returning from abroad, receives faculties in the Midland District, and is appointed chaplain at Heythrop, Oxon.

May 1. "Roman Catholic Meeting" held in opposition to the Cisalpine Club.

June-August. The British houses in the Low Countries are broken up. The communities arrive in England destitute. They are provided for by Bishop Douglass, with the assistance of different members of the old Catholic families.

July 28. Death of Robespierre. The rigours of the imprisonment of the British communities are immediately mitigated.

August. Establishment of College at Mr. Weld's mansion at Stonyhurst.

October. Studies established at Crook Hall, Durham, by students from Douay, under Rev. Thomas Eyre, as President, and Rev. J. Lingard as Vice-President.

November 1. Northern students recalled from Old Hall Green and sent to Crook Hall.

November 24. English Collegians released from Doullens and return to Douay.

1795, March 2. The English Collegians having been set free land at Dover.

April 24. Death of Bishop Thomas Talbot. Bishop Charles Berington succeeds as Vicar Apostolic of the Midland District.

May 3-4. Arrival of English communities from France. They are received by Bishop Douglass as before.

August 15. Final settlement of St. Edmund's College; Rev. Gregory Stapleton, President, and Rev. William Poynter, Vice-President. New College begun four days later.

August. Meeting of Lancashire Clergy at Preston pleads for General College in the North. Dr. Douglass answers them.

1796, May. Bishop Berington, having been refused his faculties, sends his defence to Rome.

August. Arrival of Abbé Carron in London.

September 21. The King's House at Winchester closed: the

French Clergy dispersed and sent to Reading, Thame and Paddington.

Chapel built by Mrs. Heneage at Cowes.

1797, June 3. Censure against Staffordshire Clergy, Members of the old Committee and others published by Bishop Walmesley.

September. Further Revolution in France, and the French Clergy who had gone back return to England. Several French Chapels opened in London during the next year or two.

October 13. Bishop Berington signs formula sent from Rome at Wolverhampton.

November 25. Death of Bishop Walmesley. Bishop Sharrock succeeds as Vicar Apostolic of the Western District.

December 20. Attempted Revolution in Rome. French general killed outside the Embassy.

1798, January. Processions and manifestations of devotion in Rome.

February 10. Rome occupied by the French.

February 21. The Pope carried away by the French to Siena. The English College seized. The students sent to England with Rev. P. MacPherson, agent of the Scots Bishops.

March 7. Rev. R. Smelt escapes from Rome and goes to Pisa.

May 26. The Pope removed to the Carthusian Monastery at Florence.

June. Arrival of the students of English and Scots Colleges in London.

June 5. Bishop Berington's faculties delivered by Rev. P. MacPherson to Bishop Douglass.

June 8. Sudden death of Bishop Charles Berington.

July 12. Benedictine Chapter held at Birmingham. The case of Rev. Joseph Wilkes discussed. Account in his own favour afterwards printed by him.

October 18. Publication of "Statement of Facts" by the Staffordshire Clergy.

Chapel opened at Brompton (Chatham).

1799, March. The Pope removed from Florence.

April 30. The Pope carried across the pass of Mount Cenis, on his way to Briançon.

May 25. Rev. Joseph Wilkes's faculties withdrawn by the Benedictine Provincial. He appeals to the President General.

June 24. Death of Rev. W. Cowley, O.S.B., President General of the Benedictines. He is succeeded by Rev. J. Brewer, O.S.B.

1799, July 6. The Pope arrives at Grenoble.
July. The Pope is removed to Valence.
August 24. Rev. J. Brewer, O.S.B., decides the appeal in favour of Rev. Joseph Wilkes.
August 29. Death of Pope Pius VI. at Valence.
September 29. Opening of "New College" at Old Hall.
November 16. Solemn Dirge and Requiem for Pope Pius VI. at St. Patrick's Chapel, Soho, at the expense of Mgr. Erskine.
Opening of the French Chapel in King Street.
1800, January 2. At the request of Bishop Gibson, temporarily ruling the Midland District, Rev. J. Brewer withdraws Rev. Joseph Wilkes from the mission.
March 4. Election of Pope Pius VII.
May 21. Bill of Sir Henry Mildmay for the gradual suppression of Convents introduced into the House of Commons.
May 23. Rev. Gregory Stapleton and John Nassau start for Rome to consult the Holy See as to the marriage between the Prince of Wales and Mrs. Fitzherbert.
July 4. Sir Henry Mildmay's Bill passed by the Commons.
July 10. Sir Henry Mildmay's Bill thrown out by the Lords.
August 18. Decision given by the Pope in favour of the validity of the marriage between the Prince of Wales and Mrs. Fitzherbert.
November 5. Archbishop Spina arrives at Paris to conduct negotiations on behalf of the Pope with Napoleon, for the restoration of religion in France. Many French priests return to France.
November 7. Dr. Gregory Stapleton elected Vicar Apostolic of the Midland District.
1801, March 8. Consecration of Dr. Gregory Stapleton by Bishops Douglass, Moylan and Sharrock at St. Edmund's College.
July 15. Concordat between the Pope and Napoleon signed in Paris.
August 15. Concordat ratified in Rome.
Autumn. Many French Clergy return to France.
August 20. Staffordshire Clergy (except Rev. J. Carter) reconciled.
November 26. Meeting of Bishops at St. Edmund's College to discuss the re-establishment of Douay College.
December 4. Further meeting in London, the Douay "Seniors" attending. Decision not to re-establish Douay College.

1801, December 7. Mgr. Erskine leaves London.
Rev. Joseph Wilkes retires abroad in consequence of paralytic stroke.

1802, March 27. Peace of Amiens signed.
April 11. The Concordat published in London. The majority of French Clergy return to France.
May 20. The Rev. John Daniel, Bishop Stapleton and others go to France to reclaim the Colleges.
May 23. Death of Bishop Stapleton at St. Omer.
July 14. Benedictine Chapter at Lincoln's Inn Fields. Rev. Joseph Wilkes still abroad, but ready to sign required retractation on his rerurn.

1803, March 1. Rev. John Milner elected Vicar Apostolic of the Midland District.
March 3. Rev. William Poynter elected Coadjutor to Bishop Douglass.
March 31. Death of Rev. J. Carter.
May 22. Consecration of Bishop Milner at Winchester, by Bishops Douglass, Gibson and Sharrock. Sermon by Rev. Thomas White. Synod of Vicars Apostolic held.
May 29. Consecration of Bishop Poynter at St. Edmund's College by Bishops Douglass, Gibson and Sharrock. Sermon by Bishop Milner. Synod of Vicars Apostolic concluded.

INDEX.

NOTE.—In order to facilitate reference, the full index is bound up with each volume.

ACT OF UNION, the, ii., 215, 217.
Acton Burnell, ii., 105.
Addington, Henry, i., 262, 264.
Aged Poor Society, i., 31, 32.
Aire, English nuns at, ii., 82, 83, 168.
Amesbury, ii., 115, 125.
Ampleforth, i., 82; ii., 96, 105.
Antonelli, Cardinal Prefect of Propaganda, i., 221, *seq.*; ii., 39, 46, 48, 70, 131, 155, 177, 179, 238.
Antwerp, Carmelites at, ii., 93.
"Apologetical Epistle" of Bishop Poynter, i., 11.
Archer, Rev. James, i., 28, 29, 210, 211, 319; ii., 139.
Arundel, i., 14, 52.
Arundell of Wardour, Lord, i., 238; ii., 125.
"Auctorem Fidei," the Bull, ii., 146, 152.
Augustinianesses of Paris, i., 69, 85; ii., 81.
— — Bruges, i., 85; ii., 93, 117, 125.
— — Louvain, i., 85; ii., 118; at Hammersmith, 125; Amesbury, 125; Newton Abbott, 125.
Avranches, Bishop of, ii., 11.

BADDESLEY CLINTON, ii., 55.
Banister, Rev. Robert, i., 175.
Bar Convent, York, i., 35 *seq.*; ii., 126, 129.
Barnard, Rev. James, i., 75; signs the Protestation, 145, 146, 210, 211; against the amended Oath, 212, 213, 218, 219, 220, 221, 223, 231, 233, 234, 249, 250, 252, 318, 323.
Barratts of Milton, the, ii., 182.
Barruel, Abbé, ii, 9, 10, 11, 20.
Bavarian Chapel, i., 25, 190.
Beaumont, Rev. Edward, ii., 154.
Beauregard, Père, ii., 15, 26.
Bedingfield, Mrs., i., 37, 38.
Beeston, Rev. George, i., 154.
Bellasyse, Rev. Charles, ii., 52, 239, 247.
Benedictine Monks, English, i., 15, 54, 68, 82.
— — at Douay, ii., 75; expulsion, 77; imprisoned with English Collegians at Doullens, 78, 80.
— — at Paris, i., 69, 329; ii., 81, 128.
Benedictine Nuns, Brussels, i., 83; ii., 92, 98, 118, 122; Winchester, 123, 204, 209.
— — Cambray, i., 83; ii., 83; prisoners at Compiégne, 84; martyrdom of Carmelite nuns, 85; their relics, 86; Stanbrook, 86.
— — Dunkirk, i., 84; ii., 83; Hammersmith, 128; Teignmouth, 128.
— — Ghent, i., 83, 84; ii., 92, 93, 117, 118; Oulton, i., 83, 84.
— — Paris, i., 83; ii., 81, 82, 128; Colwich, i., 83, 84.
— — Ypres, i., 84, 85; ii., 93.
Benedictine nuns, French, from Montargis, ii., 32.
Benevolent Society, the, i., 32.
Berington, Bishop Charles, Vicar Apostolic, Midland District, early career, i., 122 *seq.*; elected on Committee, 122; the Protestation, 146; first condemnation of Oath, 179; reply to Lancashire Clergy protest, 205; at clergy meeting (Feb. 2, 1790), 210; Committee's candidate for London Vicariate, 218; "elected" by clergy, 220; repudiates pretension to London Vicariate, 232, 252, 321, 324, 328; ii., 45, 111, 130; becomes Vicar Apostolic of Midland District, 131; retractation to *Blue Books* demanded, 133; memorial to Cardinal Gerdil, 134 *seq.*; formula modified and signed, 140 *seq.*; advice to Staffordshire Clergy, 152; sudden death, 153.
Berington, Rev. Joseph, early career, i., 7; *State and Behaviour of English*

Catholics, 8, 9, 12, 13, 14, 60, 287; on the meeting after the Act, 317; presents "Staffordshire Clergy's" letter to Committee, 320; writes their "Appeal," 335; *Memoirs of Panzani*, ii., 44; refused faculties, ii., 45, 148; *Exposition of Our Sentiments*, ii., 149, 152; peace with Bishop Douglass, 161; *Examination of Events termed Miraculous*, 181; letter in *Gentleman's Magazine*, 212; suspended, 213; "retractation," 213; submission and declaration, 214; advice to Staffordshire Clergy, 240.
Berkeley of Spetchley, Mr., ii., 125, 128.
Beste, Henry Digby, i., 300.
Bew, Rev. John, D.D., President of Seminary at Paris, i., 69; chosen by Cisalpines as head of proposed school, ii., 55 *seq.*; President of Oscott, 103, 142, 143; asks votes for new Vicar Apostolic, Midland District, 154; claims to be Administrator, 155; issues circular, 156, 240, 241, 251.
Birmingham, St. Peter's, i., 7, 306.
Blanchardists, ii., 234.
"Blue Books," the, i., 2; ii., 47, 132, 138, 139, 145, 210, 238.
First Blue Book, i., 74, 183, 248.
Second Blue Book, i., 241, 254, 257, 326, 333, 349; ii., 158.
Third Blue Book, i., 2, 170, 177, 183, 215, 278, 285, 338, 340 *seq.*; ii., 62, 145, 151, 158, 198.
"Blue Nuns," the, i., 69; ii., 81, 128.
Borgia, Cardinal, ii., 156, 192, 236, 253, 254.
Bornheim, Dominican house at, ii., 167.
Borough Chapel, the, i., 193, 196.
Bourret, Abbé, ii., 172.
Brambridge, i., 50.
Bramston, James Yorke, i., 300.
Braschi, Cardinal, ii., 177.
Brewer, Rev. J. B., President General, O.S.B., ii., 159, 237, 251.
Bridgettine nuns, i., 75, 76.
Bristol, Trenchard Street Chapel, i., 7, 306; ii., 130, 150.
Brockhampton, i., 50.
Bromley Hall, i., 43.
Bruges, i., 85; ii., 93, 117.
Bruning, Rev. George, ii., 181, 182.
Brussels, Benedictine nuns of, i., 83; ii., 92, 93, 98, 118, 122 *seq.*
Buckingham, Marchioness of, ii., 27, 28, 129, 164.
Buckingham, Marquis of, ii., 19, 28, 49, 116, 234.
Buckland (Berks.), i., 46; ii., 45, 214, 215.
"Buff Book," the, i., 356 *seq.*
Bulmarsh, i., 45.
Burke, Edmund, i., 4, 262, 272; ii., 2, 12, 19, 165, 166, 200.
Burton Park, i., 51.
Butler, Rev. Alban, i., 67.
Butler, Charles, i., 4, 58, 59; Secretary to Committee, 90; private life, 91, 93 *seq.*, 99, 111, 128 *seq.*; persuades Rev. J. Barnard to sign Protestation, 146; also Bishop James Talbot, 147; drafts Catholic Relief Bill, 152; account of New Oath, 157; defence of "Protesting Catholic Dissenters," 161 *seq.*; no essential difference between Oath and Protestation, 168; suggested visit to the north, 173; his "Red Book," 174; his amendment of Oath, 208; adopted by "Open Committee Meeting," 211, 212, 213, 231, 234, 240, 241, 249; Butler and Milner, 274, 279; ii., 207, 210; receives £1,000 from Committee, i., 322; disclaims writing history of disputes, 352; on result of "Mediation," 356; French Refugees, ii., 16, 24, 25, 124; on genuineness of Museum Protestation, ii., 58 *seq.*, 152, 161; appreciation of Burke, ii., 166; on "Monastic Institutions Bill," ii., 205, 211; on Dr. Geddes, 248.

Cale Hill, i., 47.
Cambray, Benedictine nuns at, ii., 83 *seq.*, 128.
Campanelli, Cardinal, ii., 37 *seq.*, 50, 177.
Carisbrooke, i., 86; ii., 125.
Carmelite Martyrs of Compiégne, ii., 85, 86.
Carmelites, i., 82, 86; ii., 86 *seq.*, 93, 118, 125.
Carron, Abbé, ii., 24, 173 *seq.*, 233, 255.
Carter, Rev. John, i., 28, 29; ii., 56, 149 *n.*, 240, 243 *seq.*
Catholic Emancipation, i., 1, 314; ii. 215 *seq.*
Catholic families, old, the main support of Catholicism, i., 7.
Catholic Relief Act of 1778, i., 1 *seq.*
Catholic Relief Act of 1791, i., 159; introduced in House of Commons: announced beforehand, 263; referred to Committee of House, 266; in preliminary Committee, 271; first and second readings, 279; Committee stage, Oath modified, 281; Report stage, 281; third reading, 282; in House of Lords, first reading, 284; second reading, 288; speech by Bishop Horsley, 288 *seq.*; Committee stage, substitution of Irish Oath, 294; third

reading, 296; accepted by Commons and Royal assent, 296; benefits conferred, 298 *seq.*; leaves double land-tax, 312; effect on Catholic schools, 311; ii., 70; effect on professional classes, i., 312; on the lower classes, 313; what it did not do, 314.
Catholic Relief Bill, proposed, discussed by the Committee, i., 129; draft by Butler and Hargrave, 152.
Challoner, Bishop, i., 1, 15, 19, 21, 28 *n.*, 29 *n.*, 31 *n.*, 34, 39, 40, 46, 71, 133, 304, 324.
Chapter, the, i., 31.
Chatham, i., 306, 310.
Cheam, i., 42.
Chelsea, ii., 171, 233.
Cheverus, Abbé, ii., 171.
Chichester, ii., 125.
Cisalpine Club, the, origin, i., 340; ii., 51; relation to Committee, ii., 51; Catholics suspicious of, 52-54; proposes new Catholic school, 54 *seq.*; dispute as to authenticity of Protestation in Museum, 59; resolutions, 62; rise and failure of rival "Roman Catholic Meeting," 63 *seq.*; Rev. J. Wilkes resigns membership, 66; proposal to change name of club, 62 *seq.*; later history of, 67; minute book, 51-68.
Civic Oath, the, ii., 2, 3, 6.
Civil Constitution of Clergy, ii., 2, 70.
Clare Abbey, Darlington, i., 85.
Cleghorn, Thomas, ii., 167, 168, 170.
Clifford, Henry, i., 148, 149, 232, 250; ii., 51 *seq.*
Clifford, sixth Lord, i., 94, 111, 117, 231, 257; ii., 52, 100, 101, 126.
Clifford, seventh Lord, ii., 238.
Clifford, Lewis and Arthur, ii., 75, 79.
Clifford, Thomas (afterwards Sir Thomas Clifford Constable), i., 221, 318, 323, 325, 328; ii., 158.
Clinton, Rev. A., i., 150.
Clough, Rev. Anthony, i., 331.
Collingridge, Rev. P., O.S.F., ii., 76.
Colman Place, i., 43.
Colwich, i., 83, 84.
Committee, the Catholic, memorial to Pitt quoted, i., 3; letter from Bishop Walmesley, 5, 6, 42, 44; origin, 88; Cisalpine principles, 89; active members, 90; tardy Episcopal opposition to, 92; date of formation, 93; representative character, 95; Minute Book, 95; suggests establishment of Hierarchy, 96; appealed to by Dr. Strickland, 105; Address seeking re-election, 108; re-election at general meeting (May 3, 1787), 111; repudiate interference in spiritual matters, 112; further letter on Hierarchy, 114; suggest opening a school in England, 113, 115; checked by Northern Protest, 119, 121; clergy elected on, 121; memorial to Pitt, 126; deputation to Pitt, 127, 129; proposed Bill drafted by Butler, 129, 152; secret negotiations with Government, 158; publication of new Oath, 158, 164 *seq.*; outcome of negotiations, 160; accept term "Protesting Catholic Dissenters," 161; Oath and Protestation, 168-70; first condemnation of Oath, 175; reply, 181; issue of *First Blue Book*, 184; Lancashire Clergy petition, 201; Bishop M. Gibson's pastoral, 202; Bishop Walmesley's pastoral, 203; other protests, 205; Address of Staffordshire Clergy, 205 *seq.*; suggested negotiations with Bishops, 209; "Open Committee Meeting," 210 *seq.*; why the Bill was not introduced, 215; endeavour to get Charles Berington transferred to London, 218; their proceedings translated into Italian in Rome, 223; Appeal of Ladies, etc., 229; indignation at appointment of Bishop Douglass, 231; deputation to Rome arranged, 231 *seq.*; Bishop Berington having repudiated claim, resolution welcoming Bishop Douglass, 234; second condemnation of Oath, 241; answer to Bishop Douglass, 246; conference with Bishops Douglass and W. Gibson, 249 *seq.*; clerical deputation, 252; Committee's defiant attitude, 252; *Second Blue Book*, with "Manifesto and Appeal," 254, 257; Bishops invite their co-operation, 270; they act independently, 290; protest against Milner's handbill, 275; publish "State of Facts," 277; resolution at annual meeting, 317; vote of thanks to, 318; take up case of Rev. J. Wilkes, 316, 319 *seq.*; petition on his behalf, 322; Bishop Walmesley's reply, 324: "Protest and Appeal" answered by Rev. C. Plowden, 333; they complain to the VV.AA. of his language, 336; reply of Bishops, 336; *Third Blue Book*, 340; decision not to risk re-election, 340; their grievances stated to "Mediators," 345; on ecclesiastical government of England, 349; attitude of Bishops, 350; the Wilkes case again, 351; dissatisfaction with "Mediators," 353; letter from the Bishops, 354; their reply, 355; the *Buff Blue Book*, 356; ii., 39, 47, 48; Bishop Berington defends

his co-operation with, 134 *seq.*, 147, 158.
Concordat, the, negotiated, ii., 230; signed, 231; results, 232.
Condron Park, i., 43.
"Constitutional Priests," ii., 3.
Conway Street Chapel, ii., 174.
Coombes, Rev. William, i., 317, 321, *seq.*; ii., 78, 99, 150.
Coombes, Rev. William H., jun., ii., 78, 99, 165, 235.
Cornwallis, Mrs., i., 38, 39.
Corsini, Cardinal, Protector of English College, Rome, i., 63-65; ii., 177.
Costessey, ii., 128.
Cowdray Park, i., 50.
Cowes, i., 308, 309.
Cowley, Rev. William, Pres. Gen., O.S.B., ii., 159.
Crook Hall, College established by Bishop Gibson, ii., 104; students recalled from Old Hall, 105; tradition that Rev. John Daniel was nominally installed as President, 107; students for North go there, 111; College proved permanent, 112.

D'Angel, Abbé, ii., 3, 169.
Daniel, Rev. John, ii., 72, 78, 107 *seq.*, 167, 169, 249, 250.
D'Arcy, Rev. Morgan, ii., 246.
Darlington, Poor Clares at, ii., 85; Carmelites at, ii., 86, 129.
De la Marche, see St. Pol de Léon, Bishop of.
Deposing Power, the, i., 144, 167, 168.
Devereux, Rev. John, ii., 165.
Dispensing Power, the, i., 128, 130.
Dissenters, favourable to Catholic Relief Bill, i., 272, 273.
Dolebank, i., 37.
Dominicans, i., 77, 82; ii., 167; Nuns, i., 86; ii., 93, 118, 125.
Dormer, Charles, i., 318.
Douai Abbey, i., 45, 54, 69.
Douay, English College, i., 54; English spirit at, 58; effects of isolation, 60; suggestions of Committee, 115; Dissolution, ii., 70 *seq.*; question of replacing it after Revolution, 96 *seq.*; attempts to recover, 167 *seq.*, 249; decision not to re-establish, 250.
Douglass, Bishop, V.A. of London District, early career, i., 71, 197, 220; asked by Bishop James Talbot to become his Coadjutor, 197; consults Bishop M. Gibson, 198; voted for in second place by clergy, 220; elected Vicar Apostolic, 231; consecrated, 238; with Bishop W. Gibson condemns Oath, 241; conference with Committee, 249; invites co-operation of Committee, 270, 280, 281, 282, 283, 284; Pastoral on Relief Act, 297, 300, 304; at Meeting after Act, 317 *seq.*; appeals to Bishop Walmesley on behalf of Wilkes, 323; reply to Committee's complaint against C. Plowden, 336, 355; care for French Refugees, ii., 13 *seq.*, 26; refuses faculties to Joseph Berington, 45; interview with Mgr. Erskine, 46 *seq.*, 74; negotiations as to Colleges, 96 *seq.*; care for refugee nuns, 122 *seq.*; case of Bishop Berington, 133, 139 *seq.*; denies approval of Midland "election," 155; letter to Joseph Berington, 180; appreciation of Burke, 166, 179, 194, 195; case of Bishop Hussey, 199 *seq.*; Mildmay's Bill, 204 *seq.*; case of Joseph Berington, 212 *seq.*
Douglass Diary quoted, ii., 30, 32, 37, 47, 48, 98, 99, 115, 116, 117, 129, 139, 140, 150, 153, 154, 155, 167, 169, 170, 171, 175, 194, 200, 201, 204, 205 206, 208, 209, 216, 217, 218, 219, 222, 223, 227, 246, 249, 250, 251, 253, 254.
Doullens, ii., 78 *seq.*
Downside Abbey, i., 54; ii., 80, 96, 105, 130, 150.
Dunkirk, religious communities at, i., 83 *seq.*; ii., 83, 128.

Easebourne, i., 50.
East Bergholt Abbey, i., 83.
East Hendred, i., 45; ii., 45.
Edgbaston, ii., 55.
"Eight Indulgences," the, i., 13.
Emancipation Club, the, ii., 51.
Encyclical Letter of Bishops condemning the Oath, first, i., 176 *seq.*; second, 241 *seq.*
Englefield, Sir Henry, i., 44, 90, 94, 98, 106, 107, 111, 114, 116, 117, 128, 153, 177, 212, 250, 251, 257, 287, 336, 339, 343, 345, 352; ii., 42, 43, 52, 62, 67.
Errington, Henry, i., 318.
Erskine, Mgr. Charles, i., 47; his career, ii., 37; origin of his mission, 38; personal aims, 39; arrives in England, 46; influence on politics slight, 48; failure of diplomatic mission, 49; cause of long stay, 49, 50, 107, 108, 126, 131, 133, 138, 177, 179, 195, 196, 199, 227, 229, 230, 231, 232, 239, 253, 254.
Eucharistic Procession (1908), i., 299, 300.
Eyre, Francis, i., 339; ii., 115.
Eyre, Lady Mary, ii., 219, 220, 224.
Eyre, Rev. Thomas, i., 117; ii., 72, 155; President of Crook Hall, ii., 104.

Fagan, Mr., secures English College property in Rome, ii., 221, 222, 228.
Fermor, William, i., 94, 98, 106, 107, 111, 114, 116, 117, 126, 127, 177, 183, 203, 204, 212, 257, 343, 352.
Filaire, Abbé, ii., 171.
Filonneau, M., ii., 172.
Fitzherbert, Mrs., i., 50; early life, 101; previous marriages, 102; secret marriage with Prince of Wales, 103; case referred to Rome, ii., 226 *seq.*
Fleury, Abbé, ii., 202, 203, 205.
Foggini, Mgr., i., 61 *seq.*
Fox, Charles, and Catholic Relief, i., 153; gives notice of amendment to Bill, 265; speech, 271.
Franciscans, i., 15, 43, 52, 54, 69, 85; ii., 77, 118, 125, 204.
French Chapels in London, ii., 171; closed, 233.
French Refugee Clergy, generosity of English people to, ii., 1, 8 *seq.*; relief organised, 19 *seq.*, 29; rules of conduct for, 21 *seq.*; spiritual retreats for, 25, 26, 28; life at Winchester, 26 *seq.*; relief voted by Parliament, 30; their numbers, 31, 127, 163; second stream arrives, 127; King's House, Winchester, withdrawn, 163; Edmund Burke's kindness to, 165; permanent chapels opened by them in London, 171; refugees sent to England from Jersey, 174; French Bishops and the Concordat, 231; general return to France, 232; some remain in England, 233.

Gage, Sir Thomas, ii., 125.
Geddes, Bishop, i., 149.
Geddes, Alexander, i., 42, 164, 313; ii., 211, 212, 246 *seq.*
George III., Catholic address to (1789), i., 154; ditto (1793), ii., 153; advice to Mr. Weld about new chapel at Lulworth, i., 235; letter on behalf of French refugee priests, ii., 29; receives Papal envoy, 49; favourable to English refugee nuns, 116; orders vessels to convey French refugees from Holland, 127; refuses Catholic Emancipation, 216, 217.
Gerard, Sir William, ii., 126.
Gerdil, Cardinal, Prefect of Propaganda, ii., 131 *seq.*, 150, 152, 153, 155, 177, *seq.*, 192, 238, 239.
Ghent, Benedictines of, ii., 92, 93, 117.
Gibson, Bishop Matthew, V.A. of Northern District, early opposition to Committee, i., 92, 98, 99; in conflict with ex-Jesuits, 104; disregards Committee's letter, 106; sends explanation, 106, 107, 112, 122, 137; agrees to sign Protestation if necessary, 147; signature erased, 150; prohibits Oath, 173; Pastoral against Committee, 202; refuses to attend meeting, 209; death, 225.
Gibson, Bishop William, V.A. of Northern District, President of Douay, i., 54 *seq.*; appointed Vicar Apostolic, 226, 230, 231; consecrated, 237; conference with Committee, 249 *seq.*; invites their co-operation, 270; returns to the North, 280, 283, 319; plans for College in North, ii., 97, 99, 101, 104, 108, 110 *seq.*, 142, 143, 144, 150, 152, 153; claims jurisdiction during Midland vacancy, 156; confirmed by Cardinal Borgia, 156, 169; takes action against Wilkes, 236; and against Staffordshire Clergy, 239; claims jurisdiction again on Bishop Stapleton's death, 252; at consecration of Bishops Milner and Poynter, 255.
Giffard, Bishop Bonaventure, i., 19, 38 39.
Gloucester, i., 306.
Gordon Riots, i., 21.
Gosport, i., 50, 306 *seq.*; ii., 13.
Gother, Rev. John, i., 74.
Gravelines, Poor Clares at, i., 55, 85; ii., 83; at Gosfield Hall, 128; Darlington, 129.
Greenwich, i., 306, 310.
Griffiths, Rev. John, i., 194.

Haggerston, Sir Carnaby, i., 94; ii., 129.
Hales Place, i., 47.
Hammersmith, i., 21, 34 *seq.*; ii., 124, 128.
Hampstead, ii., 171, 233.
Hartpury Court, ii., 125.
Hengrave Hall, ii., 125.
Heythrop, ii., 157.
Higginson, Rev. James, ii., 83, 84.
Hippisley, Sir John Cox, ii., 37, 38, 177, 178, 201.
Hoadly, Dr., Bishop of Winchester, ii., 202.
Hodgson, Rev. Joseph, ii., 73, 109, 250, 252.
Holme Hall, ii., 126.
Hoogstraet, ii., 86-90, 93, 125.
Hornyold, Thomas, i., 93, 98, 106, 107, 111, 180, 183, 212, 251, 257, 336, 343, 345, 352.
Horrabin, Rev. Thomas, ii., 180, 182.
Horsley, Dr. Samuel, Bishop of St. David's (afterwards of Rochester; then of St. Asaph), i., 286 *seq.*; speech on Relief Bill, 288-93; proposes the Irish

Oath, 294; speaks in defence of the Convents, ii., 208, 209.
Howard, Bernard, ii., 42.
Hurst, Rev. William, i., 57.
Hussey, Bishop Thomas, first President of Maynooth, Bishop of Waterford, i., 27, 29, 154, 189, 190, 224, 231, 233, 301, 302, 303; ii., 146, 197, 198, 199, 200.

Infallibility, Papal, and "the Protestation," i., 143.
Ingatestone Hall, i., 43.

Jacobite party abandoned by Catholics, i., 10, 88, 89.
Jerningham, Sir William, i., 111; ii. 128.
Jersey, ii., 173, 174.
Jesuits, after the Suppression, i., 15, 77; Dr. Strickland's suggestion to Bp. Talbot, 78-80; question of disposition of their property, 104 *seq.*; College at St. Omer, 65; at Bruges, 66, 77; at Liège, 76; ii. 90, 166; at Stonyhurst, ii., 103.
Jones, Sir William, i., 111.

Kelvedon Hall, i., 43.
King Street Chapel, ii., 233.
Kirk, Rev. John, i., 13, 14, 28, 29, 61, 124, 155; ii., 142, 148, 153, 154, 241, 242, 243.
Kitchen, Rev. Edward, ii. 72.

Ladies' Appeal to Committee, i., 228, 229, 232.
Lancashire Clergy petition against Oath, i., 201, 202.
Lanherne, i., 86; ii., 125.
Lawson, Sir John, i., 111, 113, 119 *seq.*, 257, 275, 343; ii., 125, 237.
Liège Academy, i., 76; ii., 90, 100, 103, 167.
Liège, Canonesses of Holy Sepulchre, i., 76; ii., 90 *seq.*; at New Hall, 126.
Lierre, ii., 93.
Lincoln's Inn Fields Chapel, i., 26, 199, 220; ii., 195.
Lindow, Rev. John, ii., 109.
Lingard, Rev. John, i., 49, 50; ii., 75, 104, 106 *seq.*, 255.
Lisbon, English College at, i., 73; earthquake, 74, 75; Convent of Bridgettines, 75, 76.
Little George Street Chapel, ii., 171, 233.
Louvain, Augustinian Canonesses, i., 85; ii., 93.
Lulworth Castle, i., 235 *seq.*

Macaulay, sketch of Catholic squire, i., 10.
MacPherson, Rev. P., ii., 153, 190, 222.
Magnani, Abbate, i., 65.
Main, Rev. George, i., 257, 268, 320.
Matthew, Sir Toby, i., 84.
Mawhood's Diaries, i., 29.
Maynooth College, ii., 71, 195, 197.
Mediation the, i., 339 *seq.*; ii., 40, 42, 147.
Meynell, Rev. Thomas, ii., 6.
Middlesex Hospital, ii., 172.
Mildmay, Sir Henry, ii., 201, 202, 204, 206.
Milner, Rev. John, at Winchester, i., 47; as a controversialist, 48, 51, 91, 93; drafts Clergy Protest against Committee, 94, 95, 98, 99; on the Committee's Address, 109; prepares rejoinder, 111; opinion of Wilkes, 125; on Throckmorton's "Exposition," 133, 134, 145; on Episcopal signatures to Protestation, 148; on "Protesting Catholic Dissenters," 164, 170; signs Protestation, 151; on refusal of Oath by signers of Protestation, 170; attends meeting of Bishops, 175; obituary sermon on Bishop James Talbot, 18, 19, 186, 187, 198, 199, 201, 228, 231, 237, 238; on the "Manifesto and Appeal," 257, 258; on the surprise of Bishops at introduction of Relief Bill, 266; his activity in opposing it, 268 *seq.*; circulates first handbill in House of Commons, 270; second ditto, 274; meeting at Norfolk House, 277; certificate of Bishops, 277, 278, 279; resigns agency of W. A.A., 280; writes to Bishops of Salisbury and Hereford, 284, 295, 314; at meeting after the Act, 318; on Staffordshire Clergy, 320; answers Address, 331; on C. Plowden's reply to "Protest and Appeal," 333; on Ecclesiastical Government, 349; his *Ecclesiastical Democracy Detected*, ii., 40; writes Pastoral for Bishops condemning Throckmorton's book, 40; letter to Bishop Douglass, 49; dispute with Cisalpine Club about Museum Protestation, 57 *seq.*; on the failure of "Roman Catholic Meeting," 65, 66; on question of a school, 106; receives Brussels Benedictine nuns at Winchester, 123; suggested as Coadjutor to Bishop Berington, 139; anxiety to exclude him, 155, 161, 182; history of Winchester, 201, 211; controversy with Dr. Sturges, 202 *seq.*; *End of Controversy* withheld, 210; recommended by Propaganda as Vicar Apostolic, 228; election cancelled by

Pope, 228, 232; suggested again as Bishop, 252 *seq.*; consecrated at Winchester, 255; preaches at consecration of Bishop Poynter, 256.
Milton (Berks.), i., 46; ii., 182.
Miraculous Madonnas, ii., 100.
Mitford, Mr. (afterwards Sir John, later Lord Redesdale), i., 155, 159, 263, 270, 318, 344; ii., 133, 205.
Monastic Institutions Bill, ii., 200 *seq.*; occasion of, 201; nature of, 204; in Committee of House, 205; passage through Commons, 206; in Lords, 208; thrown out by the Lords, 209.
Monmouth, i., 306.
Montague, Lord, i., 50, 51.
Montpellier, Bishop of, ii., 30.
Moore, Dr., Archbishop of Canterbury, i., 284.
Moorfields, i., 26, 189.
More, Rev. Thomas, Provincial, S.J., before suppression, i., 15, 214.
Morel, Abbé, ii., 171, 233.
Moylan, Dr., Bishop of Cork, ii., 194, 216.

Nash Court, i., 47.
Nassau, Rev. John, mission to Rome, ii., 225 *seq.*
Needham, Rev. J. Turberville, i., 313.
Nelson, Lord, ii., 218, 219, 220.
Newburgh, Lord, ii., 15.
New Hall, ii., 126.
Newport (Isle of Wight), i., 306.
Newport (Shropshire), ii., 157.
Newton Abbott, i., 85; ii., 125.
Norfolk, Duke of, i., 9, 43, 52.

Oates, Titus, i., 70.
Oath of Abjuration, i., 166.
Oath of Allegiance, i., 105 *seq.*, 168.
Oath of 1774 (Irish), i., 166, 268, 294.
Oath of 1778 (English), i., 142, 166, 175, 177, 208, 261.
Oath of Supremacy, i., 111, 112, 167, 295; ii., 44.
Oath, proposed in 1789, i., 156 *seq.*; text, 164; controversy concerning, 166 *seq.*; first condemnation by, VV.AA., 176; opposition to Butler's amended Oath, 212; condemnation by Propaganda, 224; second condemnation by VV.AA., 241; theological opinions concerning, 251; amended in House of Commons, 281; thrown out by Lords in favour of Irish Oath, 294; subsequent controversies, 317, 319, 352, 355; ii., 47, 160, 161.
O'Connell, Daniel, i., 68, 75.
Odeschalschi, Mgr., ii., 199.
Old Brotherhood of English Secular Clergy, the, i., 31.
Old Hall Green, school at, i., 40, 41, 57, 58, 117, 118, 188, 199, 311; ii., 55 *n.*; proposed for seminary in place of Douay, 97; becomes St. Edmund's College, 98; departure of Northern students, 105; further change of plans, 106; legacy of Mr. Sone, 108; final settlement and building begun, 109, 165; building opened, 194, 195.
O'Leary, Rev. Arthur, i., 113, 191, 302; ii., 195, 208, 245, 246.
Oscott, i., 123; ii., 103, 110 *seq.*
Oulton Abbey, i., 83, 84.
Oxford University and the Refugees, ii., 20.

Paddington Green, ii., 164, 172.
Paris, Communities at, i., 68, 69; English Seminary, ii., 166, 249; Benedictines during Revolution, ii., 81, 128.
Parker, Rev. H., O.S.B., ii., 81, 82.
"Pastorini," see Bishop Walmesley.
Penn, school for children of emigrés at, ii., 165, 166.
Penswick, Rev. John, ii., 72.
Perry, Rev. John, i., 257, 320; ii., 255.
Perry, Rev. Philip, i., 71.
"Persuasive Resolution," the, i., 210; ii., 151, 158, 161, 198; statement of VV.AA. regarding, 151.
Peterborough, Bishop of, i., 285.
"Petite Eglise," the, ii., 232, 234.
Petre, ninth Lord, i., 41, 42, 43, 90, 93, 95, 98, 106, 107, 111, 112, 114, 116, 117, 128, 132, 137, 153, 154, 155, 177, 183, 189, 192, 193, 203, 212, 224, 231, 251, 257, 275, 305, 317, 336, 343, 345, 352; ii., 32, 33, 42, 43, 46, 52, 60, 61, 63, 67, 139, 201, 205, 207, 246.
Pilling, Rev. W., O.S.F., i., 147, 174, 208, 213, 214; ii., 77, 78.
Pistoia, Synod of, i., 89; ii., 146.
Pitt, William (Prime Minister), i., 101, 126, 127, 151, 155, 156, 158, 169, 195, 262, 266, 267, 272; ii., 19, 30, 197, 204, 205, 207, 216, 217.
Pius V., Pope St., i., 89.
Pius VI., Pope, ii., 3, 38, 146, 178, 192, 193, 195, 199.
Pius VII., Pope, ii., 218, 222, 223.
Plowden, Rev. Charles, i., 143, 144, 148, 151, 164, 214, 268, 270, 280, 325, 332 *seq.*; ii., 45, 57, 58, 59, 161.
Plowden, Francis, i., 339; ii., 42, 44.
Plowden, Rev. Robert, ii., 130, 161.
Pontoise, Benedictines of, i., 83; ii., 83.
Poor Clares, at Dunkirk, i., 85; Gravelines, i., 35, 85; ii., 83; in England, 128, 129.

Portland, Duke of, ii., 133, 163.
Portsmouth, i., 306, 307, 308; ii., 13.
Portuguese Chapel, i., 25; ii., 195.
Potier, Rev. John, i., 311; ii., 97, 109.
Potts, Rev. Thomas, ii., 103.
Poynter, Bishop, i., 47, 57; ii., 72, 73, 74, 109, 167, 235, 249, 250; appointed Coadjutor to Bishop Douglass, ii., 255; on the Cisalpine Club, i., 67.
Princethorpe, ii., 33.
"Protest and Appeal," the Committee's, i., 254, 326, 327; ii., 47, 145, 147, 148, 158, 159; C. Plowden's reply, 333; Bishops request retractation of, 355.
"Protestant," origin of term, i., 162.
"Protesting Catholic Dissenters," origin of term, i., 155, 161 *seq.*; defended by Committee, 182; rejected by VV.AA., 175 *seq.*, 263 *seq.*, 281.
Protestation, the, Butler's account of its origin, i., 131; Throckmorton's earlier suggestion, 132; further light on origin, 134 *seq.*; text of, 139 *seq.*; quoted in Gladstone's *Vaticanism*, 143; character of objections raised, 144, 145; signatures obtained, 145 *seq.*, 278, 279; voted to be deposited in British Museum, 317; authenticity of Museum document disputed, ii., 57 *seq.*, 133, 138, 160, 161.

Reading, i, 44, 45; ii., 164.
"Red Book," Butler's, i., 108, 162, 174, 181, 213.
Reeve, Rev. Joseph, i., 213 *seq.*
Richmond (Surrey), i., 300, 310.
Roe, Rev. John, ii., 241 *seq.*
"Roman Catholic Meeting," the, rival of the Cisalpine Club, ii., 63; its failure, 65, 66.
Rome, English College at, i., 60 *seq.*; English superiors obtained at ditto, ii., 177; miraculous Madonnas, 180 *seq.*; Revolution, 183 *seq.*; fate of College, 190; property reclaimed, 221, 228; Scots College, 222.
Romilly, Sir Samuel, ii., 12.
Rouen, Poor Clares at, i., 85; ii., 83; in England, 129.
Roughey, i., 43.

St. Omer, Jesuit College, i., 65; accepted by secular clergy, 66; imprisonment of students during the Terror, ii., 80 *seq.*; they arrive in England, 105, 128; attempts to recover College, 167, 170, 249.
St. Pol de Léon, Bishop of, ii., 4, 6, 20, 21, 26, 196, 203 *seq.*, 231, 234.
Sedgley Park School, i., 14, 28, 117, 118; ii., 55, 143, 148, 153.
Sharrock, Bishop Gregory, i., 149, 212; ii., 7, 78, 150, 151, 152, 157, 235, 250, 255.
Sharrock, Prior Jerome, ii., 76 *seq.*, 169, 243.
Shefford, i., 40, 311.
Sheldon, William, i., 93, 339.
"Ship" Inn, the, i., 29, 300.
Shrewsbury, fifteenth Earl of, i., 188; ii., 42, 43, 205, 207.
Silburn, Mrs. Dorothy, ii., 6, 20, 25, 30, 234.
Slindon, i., 52; ii., 15.
Smelt, Rev. Robert, Roman agent for the Vicars Apostolic, i., 222, 224, 239; ii., 37, 39, 70, 134, 137, 142, 155, 173, 176 *seq.*, 219 *seq.*, 241.
Smith, Rev. Thomas, ii., 75, 110, 250, 252.
Smythe, Sir Edward, i., 102; ii., 105.
Somers Town, ii., 174, 233.
Sone, John, ii., 108, 194.
Southampton, i., 306.
Southend (or Soberton), i., 50.
Southworth, Rev. Richard, i., 197, 220, 222, 306; ii., 13, 14.
Southworth, Rev. Thomas, ii., 152, 241 *seq.*
Spanish Place Chapel, i., 190, 301.
Staffordshire Clergy, the, *Address to Bishop T. Talbot*, i., 205, 245, 261, 287; letter to Committee in Wilkes' case, 320; resent C. Plowden's reply to "Protest and Appeal," 34; appeal to Bishop Walmesley, 334; *Appeal to the Catholics of England*, 335; *Address to Catholic Clergy of England*, 340; accept C. Plowden's explanation, 357; sign declaration, 358; C. Plowden's final letter to, 358, 359; ii., 56, 145 *seq.*; meeting at Sedgley Park, ii., 148; issue *Exposition of our Sentiments*, 149; *Statement of Facts*, 157; summoned by Bishop Gibson to retract, 239; their letter to Dr. Bew, 240; difficulty ended by Bishop Stapleton, 241 *seq.*
"Staffordshire Creed," the, i., 335; ii., 147, 241.
Stanbrook Abbey, i., 83, 84; ii., 86.
Standon Lordship School, i., 40.
Stanhope, Lord, i., 131, 134, 145, 146, 156, 293, 295; ii., 60, 61.
Stapleton, Bishop Gregory, Vicar Apostolic of Midland District, resigns post at Douay, i., 55; President of St. Omer, 67, 222; estimate of O'Connell as a boy, 68; action on behalf of the Colleges during Revolution, ii., 70; imprisoned with the Collegians at Doullens, 80; appointed head of pro-

posed foundation at Old Hall, 106; President of St. Edmund's College, 109, 155, 169, 179, 180; mission to Rome, 225 *seq.*; appointed Vicar Apostolic of Midland District, 228; consecrated, 235; reconciles Staffordshire Clergy, 241 *seq.*; goes to St. Omer, 251; death there, 251.
Stone, Rev. Marmaduke, ii., 100, 101, 103.
Stonor, Mgr. Christopher, Roman Agent for Vicars Apostolic, i., 60, 81, 197, 219, 221, 222; ii., 177, 178.
Stonyhurst College, ii., 65, 76, 96, 100, 103, 104, 106.
Storey, Rev. Arthur, ii., 100, 101, 102.
Stourton, Lord, i., 93, 98, 107, 111, 114, 116, 117, 251, 257, 275, 343; ii., 126, 205.
Stratford, i., 43.
Strickland, Rev. Joseph, i., 214.
Strickland, Rev. William, 78 *seq.*; 105, 167, 203, 228, 253, 260, 261, 325, 344; ii., 100.
Sturges, Dr., ii., 201; his *Reflections*, etc., 202; controversy with Milner, 209 *seq.*, 228; commended by Joseph Berington, 212.
Sutton, i., 43.
Sutton Place, i., 43.
Swinburn, Sir Edward, i., 93.
Synod at Winchester and Old Hall, ii., 256.

Talbot, Bishop James, V.A. London District, early history, i., 19; Coadjutor to Challoner, 21; Report to Rome, 35; correspondence with President Gibson, 56 *seq.*; on the ex-Jesuits, 80; deprecates opposition to Committee, 92; opinion of their letter, 98; changes his views on Committee, 111; favourable on school question, 118; elected on Committee, 121; on Throckmorton's "Exposition," 133; signs Protestation, 147; urges clergy to sign, 147; verbally approves of Oath, 157; illness and recovery, 172; attends meeting of VV.AA., and joins in condemnation of Oath, 175; difficulties of his position, 187; death, 199.
Talbot, Bishop Thomas, V.A. Midland District, early history, i., 18; President of St. Omer, 66; Coadjutor to Bishop Hornyold, 67, 98, 111, 138; signs Protestation, 147; attends meeting of VV.AA., and joins in condemnation of Oath, 175; refrains from promulgating condemnation, 184; assists at "Open Committee Meeting," 211; elected on Committee, 216, 220, 223, 226; reasons for not signing second condemnation of Oath, 244, 253, 321, 324, 337; declines to censure Joseph Berington, ii., 44; declines to censure Throckmorton's book, 40, 56, 57; death, 130.
Tasker, Rev. James, ii., 241 *seq.*
Taunton, i., 85.
Teignmouth Abbey, i., 83, 84; ii., 128.
Temporal Power, the, i., 143, 168.
Thame, ii., 104.
Thorndon Hall, i., 43.
Throckmorton, Sir John, i., 47, 90, 93, 98, 99, 106, 111; on Oath of Supremacy, 112, 114, 116, 117, 121; and the "Exposition," 132 *seq.*, 153, 177, 183, 192, 212, 219; pamphlet on appointment of Bishops, 227, 251; succeeds to Baronetcy, 332, 336, 340, 343, 345, 352, 353; his book condemned by VV.AA., ii., 40; stay in Rome, 39, 40; difficulty about Buckland chaplaincy, 45, 46, 48, 52, 63, 139, 214.
Throckmorton, Sir Robert, i., 46.
Thwing, Rev. Thomas, last Douay martyr, i., 37.
Tichborne, i., 50.
Tierney, Rev. Mark, ii., 47.
Tottenham, ii., 171.
Towneley, John, i., 94, 111.
Trappists, the, at Lulworth, ii., 33 *seq.*, 115.
Tudhoe, school at, ii., 100 *seq.*
Tuite, Rev. Francis, ii., 167 *seq.*
Twyford School, i., 19.

Upton Court, i., 45.
Ushaw College, i., 58; ii., 96, 104.

Valladolid, English College founded by Parsons, i., 69; passes to Secular Clergy, 71; Scots College, 72.
Veto question, the, ii., 215, 217.
Virginia Street Chapel, i., 26, 189.
Voyaux de Franous, Abbé, ii., 171, 233.

Walker, Rev. G. Augustine, President General, O.S.B., i., 325, 329, 331; ii., 83.
Walmesley, Bishop, V.A. Western District, early career, i., 4; writes as "Pastorini," on Apocalypse, 5; views on state of Catholics, 5 *seq.*; early opposition to Committee, 92; views on school question, 117, 130, 137; signs Protestation, 147; disapproves of Oath, 170; joins in condemnation of Oath, 175; letter announcing it, 177; pastoral, 179; withdraws signa-

ture to Protestation, 179, 181; pastoral against Committee, 203; present at "Open Committee Meeting," 211; only dissentient, 212; on non-introduction of Bill, 216, 223; writes to Rome against Bishop Berington, 230; joins in second condemnation of Oath, 241 *seq.*; suspends Rev. J. Wilkes, 259, 261, 266, 283, 284; letter to Archbishop of Canterbury, 285, 319, 321; Wilkes' case, 322 *seq.*; reinstates Wilkes, 327; suspends him again, 329; excommunicates his lay supporters at Bath, 330; reply to Mediators, 348; ii., 14, 44; on proposed public school, 56; refuses leave to Dr. Bew to be President, 57; on College to succeed Douay, 114; dispute with Mgr. Erskine, 126; reopens controversies, 145 *seq.*; death, 150; character and life-work, 151.
Walsh, Rev. Thomas, i., 68; ii., 241.
Walthamstow, i., 43.
Ward, Mary, i., 35, 36.
Warmoll, Rev. John, Southern Provincial, O.S.B., i., 258, 259, 324, 325, 327, 329, 330; ii., 78, 159, 236, 238.
Warwick Street Chapel, i., 25, 191 *seq.*, 302.
Waterford and Lismore, Bishop of, see Hussey, Bishop.
Webbe, Sir John, ii., 125.
Webbe, Samuel, i., 27.
Weld, Thomas of Lulworth, i., 15, 17; against Committee, 95; signs Protestation with anxiety, 150, 156, 158, 235; grandfather of Cardinal Vaughan, 236 *n.*; letter to Pitt, 266; against reappointment of Committee, 340; receives Trappist monks, ii., 33 *seq.*; Cisalpine Club, 53; offers Stonyhurst to ex-Jesuits, 100; College founded there, 103, 115, 125.
West Grinstead, i., 52.
Weston, John Webbe, i., 339 *seq.*
Wilds, Rev. William, ii., 73.
Wilkes, Rev. Joseph, O.S.B., elected on Committee, i., 122; his previous career, 124, 135, 148; suspended by Bishop Walmesley, 257 *seq.*; case taken up by Committee, 316, 319; signs declaration, 323; Regulars sympathise, 324; signs further declaration, 325; final declaration and reinstatement, 327; letter to Thomas Clifford explaining away his submission, 328; faculties again taken away, 329; leaves Bath, 330; Staffordshire Clergy take up case, 331, 340; Mediators intervene, 346; goes abroad, 353; with Sir John Throckmorton in Rome, 332; on his return settles at Heythrop in Midland District, 66; elected Vice-President of Benedictines, 66; withdraws from Cisalpine Club, 66, 143, 145, 147, 157; Declaration at Benedictine Chapter, 158; suspended by Rev. J. Warmoll, Provincial, O.S.B., 159; appeals to Rev. W. Cowley, President General and on his death to Rev. J. Brewer, who decides in his favour, 159; faculties withdrawn by Bishop Gibson, 236; removed from mission by Rev. J. Brewer, 237; abroad for his health, but ready to retract on his return, 236; subsequent history, 239 *n.*
Willacy, Rev. James, i., 40, 311.
Wilmot, John, ii., 19, 20, 28.
Winchester, i., 47, 49, 309, 310; refugees at, ii., 15, 26, 27, 31, 163; convents at, 98 *n.*, 123, 203, 204, 209.
Windham, Mr., i., 265, 318; ii., 205, 206.
Witham, i., 43.
Woburn Park, i., 43.
Wolverhampton, i., 8.
Woodfall's Register, Oath published in, i., 159, 164, 176.
Woolhampton, i., 45.
Writtle Park, i., 43.
Wyndham, Rev. Philip, ii., 14.
Wyndham, Mr., ii., 219.

York, Bar Convent, i., 35 *seq.*; ii., 126, 129.
York Street Chapel, i., 27, 154, 303.
Ypres, Benedictine nuns at, i., 83; ii., 93.

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